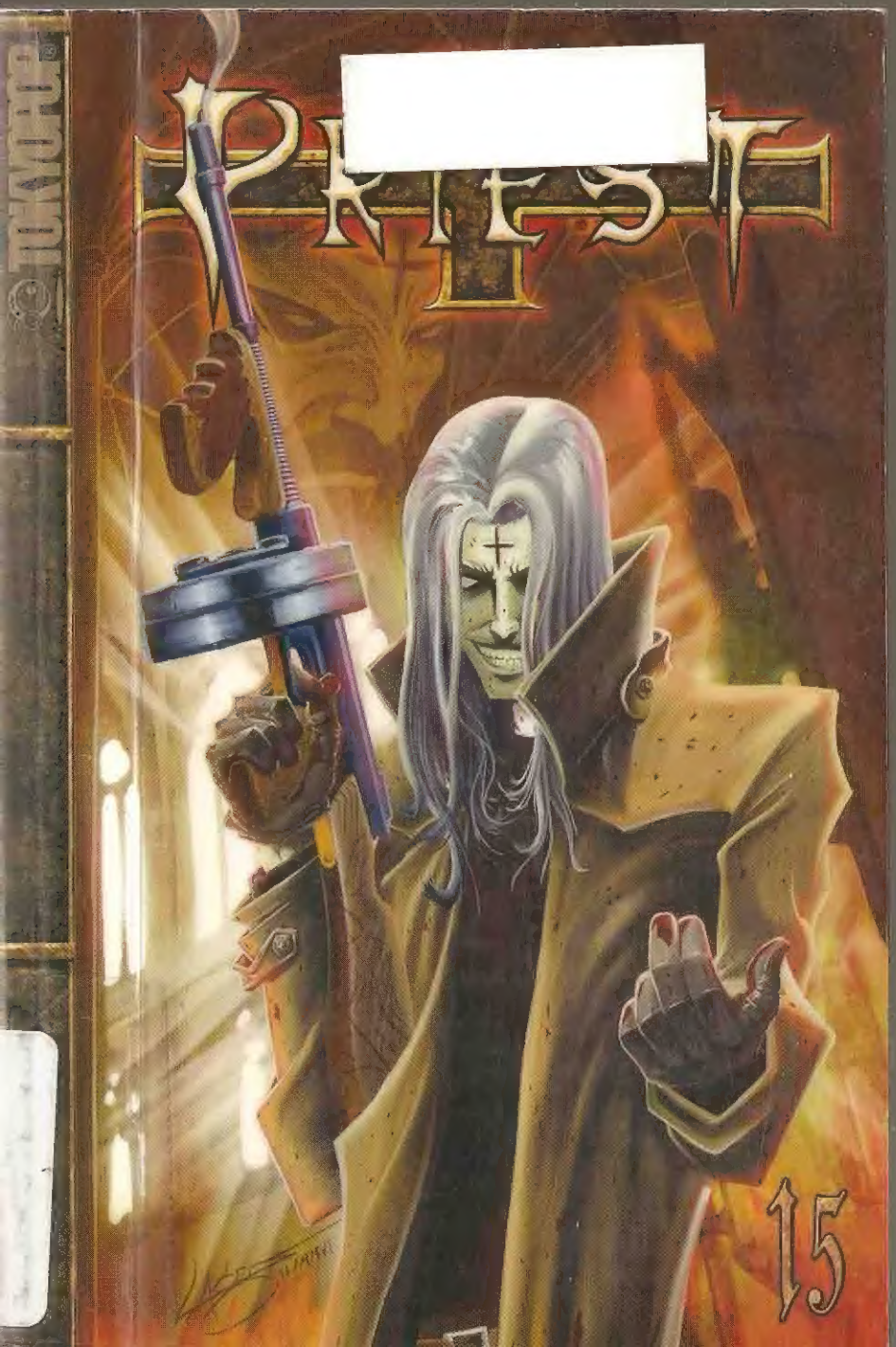
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VOLUME 15

BY
MIN-WOO HYUNG

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THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

During the war against Lucifer, the archangel Temozarela led the agents of light. In the years that followed, Temozarela watched as God's attention shifted from his seraphim to his new creation—man. Jealousy caused Temozarela and his disciples to abandon their heavenly post and attempt to corrupt humanity to prove the superiority of the seraphim to God. During the Crusades he attempted to begin his plan, but Belial sealed him in the Domas Porada for 500 years. Now, released by Ivan Isaacs, Temozarela is free again, but too weak to carry out his dark designs. His disciples have begun sanctifying the ground in the American West, spreading plague and death in preparation for the Unholy Sabbath.

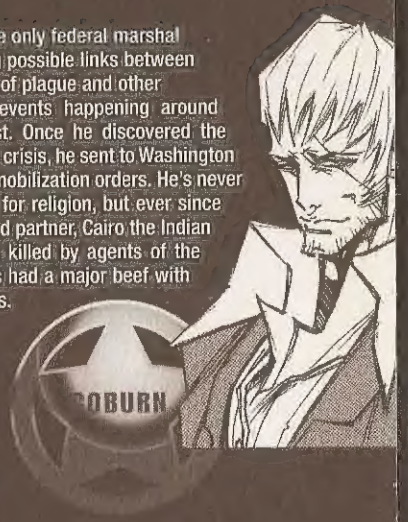
TEMOZARELA

Ivan Isaacs was a young priest with a passion for ancient cultures when he was recruited to study the Domas Porada. Little did he know that this mission would be his last—at least his last in life. After helping revive an ancient battle for Heaven and Earth, Ivan and his beloved Gena were slain. In order to get revenge and atone for endangering the world, Ivan made a pact with the devil Belial: his soul in exchange for a second chance at life ... and superhuman strength. Now Ivan wanders the Old West, hunting down Temozarela's disciples and keeping a journal of his tragic tale.

The devil Belial makes Ivan his agent in the mortal world so that he may battle the agents of the fallen archangel Temozarela, who is planning an upheaval of Heaven and Hell. Belial used to be Betheal, a Catholic priest in the Middle Ages where he was a prosecutor in trials of heresy. After Temozarela shattered his faith, Betheal turned himself into the demon Belial in order to get his revenge.

BELIAL

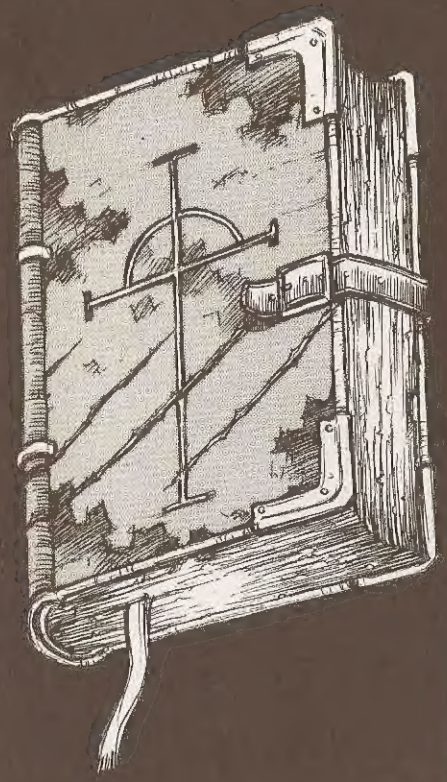
A gang leader whose life was saved by Ivan Isaacs, but not before she became infected with Temozarela's zombie curse. She was taken into custody by Coburn, and for a while she helped the lawman in his search for Ivan. Lizzie escaped, and has since joined up with another band of outlaws. Her current whereabouts are unknown.



Coburn is the only federal marshal investigating possible links between an outbreak of plague and other mysterious events happening around the Old West. Once he discovered the extent of the crisis, he sent to Washington for military mobilization orders. He's never much cared for religion, but ever since his friend and partner, Cairo the Indian tracker, was killed by agents of the Vatican, he's had a major beef with the righteous.

The de facto mayor of the remote town of Windtale, Mr. Dudley prides himself on keeping his town safe from what he sees as unsavory outside influences. He has the local officials in his pocket, the town in his debt...and Nera's troupe in his way.

The "Guardian Saint" of Windtale. This gypsy dancer takes care of a troupe of misfit performers who have recently taken up residence just outside of town. Ivan Isaac's arrival in town endangers the delicate peace she's managed to keep. Her faithful companion is the spirit-wolf Bendo, summoned by her will. And what of her relationship with Temozarela?

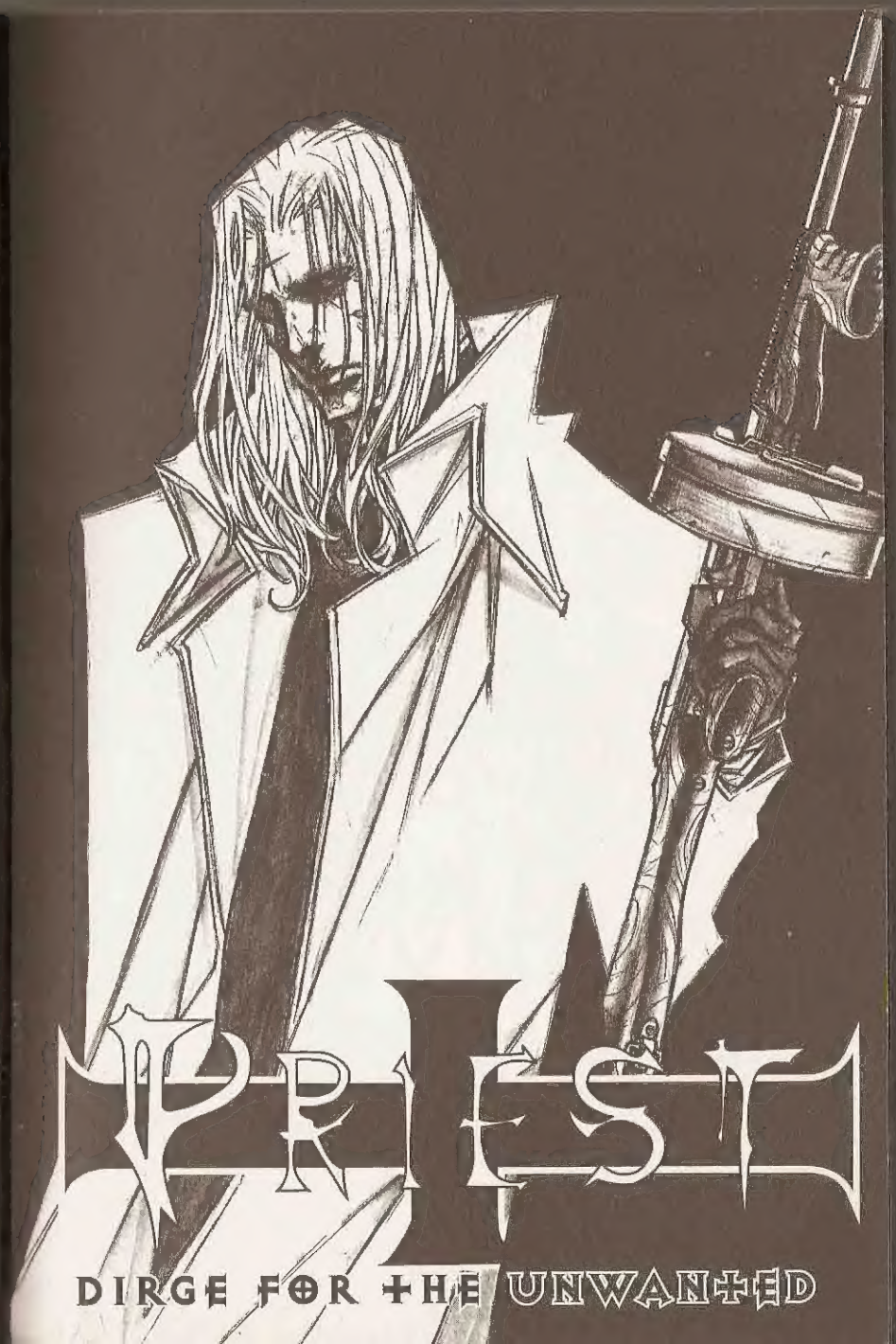


THE STORY SO FAR...

Call me simple if you will, but I live my life by two simple rules. The first, I learned from my mother, God rest her soul. Ma was a God-fearing woman and she taught me to do His will in all things. The second, I picked up from my father, a man of science. He introduced me to the world of unseen germs and infectious diseases—microscopic critters that can kill a man quick, and the only defense against them is keepin' yourself clean and pure.

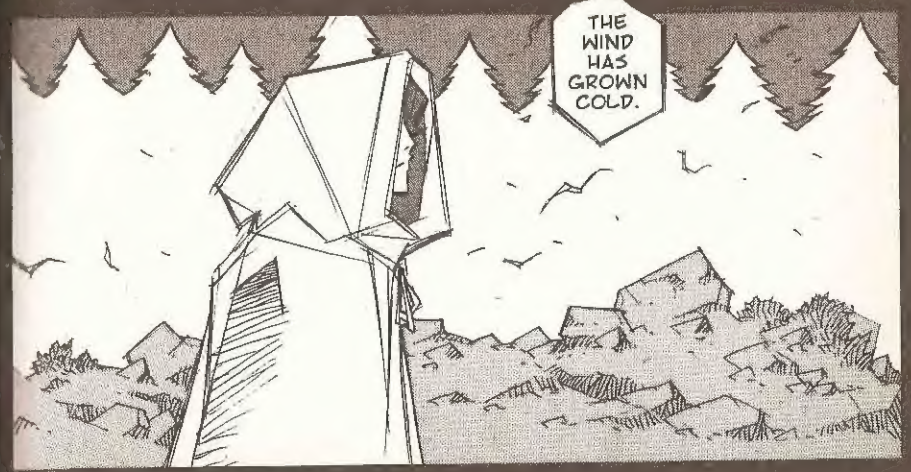
Folks in Windtale have survived by remaining true to their traditions and their beliefs. Mr. Dudley understands this, and while his methods ain't always perfect, I believe he means well. And like my parents, Mr. Dudley also understands the importance of God and staying pure. Recently, folks have been talkin' in hushed tones, like there's a storm brewin' in the hills, the mere mention of which will bring it down on us, and at the center of this storm is none other than them folks on the outskirts of town—Miss Nera and the rest. Well, enough of the whisperin'. I say it's time to stand up for what we believe and what we know by God to be true, and we should do it together as a town.

Them folks hidin' out in the woods have no place in Windtale. I know they keep to themselves and are largely unseen, but that doesn't solve the problem. It's the fact that they hide themselves that CREATES the problem. God only knows what they get up to there in those woods, and as my Pa always told me, the unseen threats are the worst.



PRIEST

DIRGE FOR THE UNWANTED


THE WIND HAS GROWN COLD.

WINTER WILL SOON COME TO WIND-TALE.
OH!
LISTEN, BENDO.
I JUST GOT A GREAT IDEA!
WHAT... IS THIS?
IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE A HOUSE?
A HOUSE?
HA HA HA! NO WAY!
DID MOSHI DRAW IT?
HA HA HA!!
HA HA... REALLY, WHO DREW THIS?
HA HA! ME.

HEEK!
IS IT THAT FUNNY?
HMM... IF IT'S THAT BAD...
...WHY DON'T YOU TRY DRAWING IT YOURSELF?
UH... NO...
I...WAS JUST GOING ALONG WITH EVERYONE!
.....
I JUST WANTED TO SHOW SOMETHING TO ALL OF YOU, BUT I GUESS YOU AREN'T INTERESTED.
THE KIDS WERE JUST JOKING AROUND.
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO SENSITIVE?
LET'S...
...BUILD A HOUSE HERE!!

.....
HUH?
FWAP
WE'LL BUILD A GRAND HOUSE, JUST LIKE THIS.
AND WE'LL ALL WORK ON IT TO-GETHER!!
HUH...?
SEE THAT BIG FOREST ON THE HILLSIDE?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT DO WE THINK?
BECAUSE THE TREES THERE ARE SO DENSE...
...IT WILL BE WARM IN WINTER AND COOL IN SUMMER.

IF WE BUILD A HOUSE THERE, IT'LL TURN OUT GREAT.
I'M SURE OF IT!

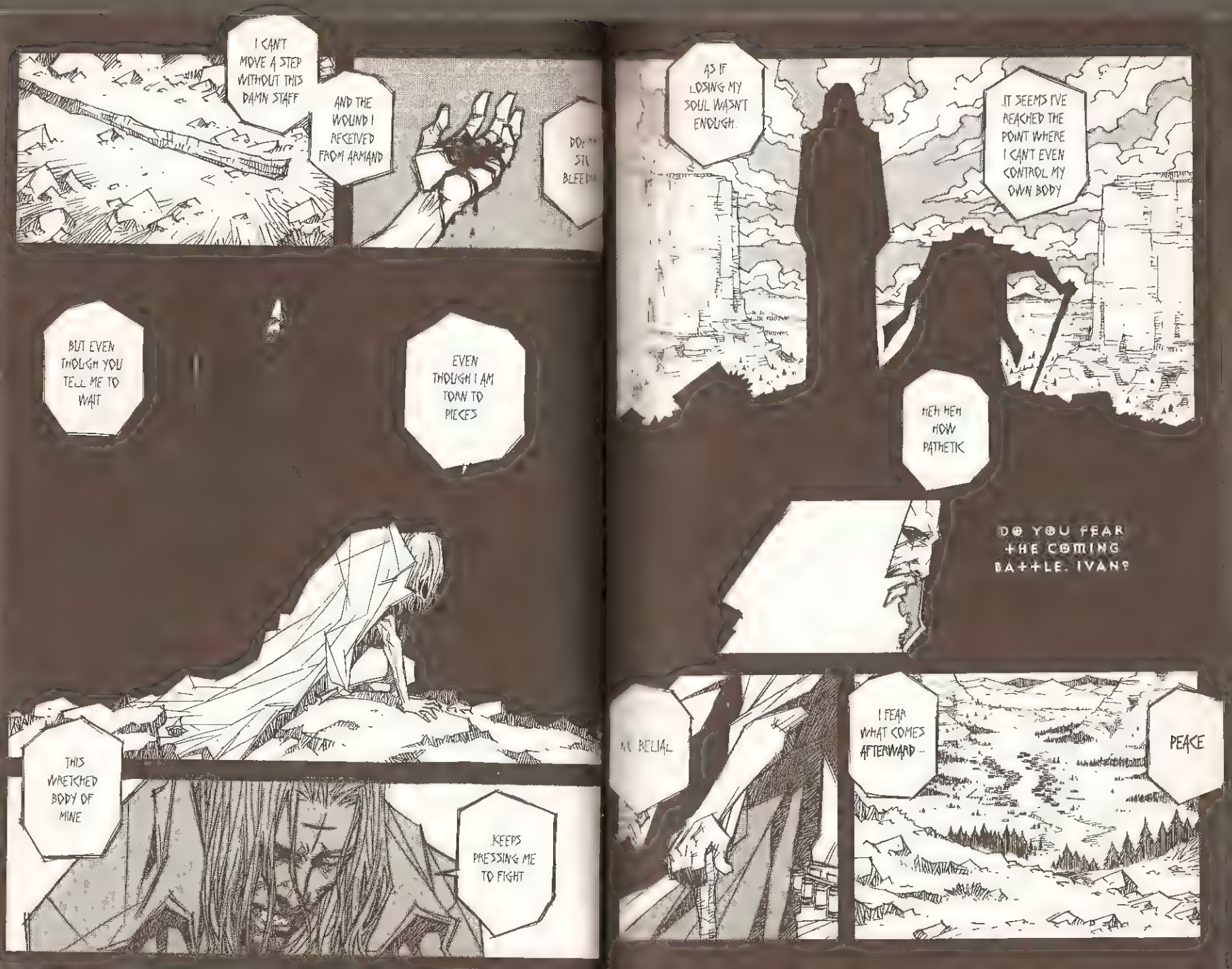
LET'S SEE...
IF WE'RE GOING TO BUILD A HOUSE, WHERE SHOULD WE START?
F-FUST WE SHUD CUT DOWN DA TWEES.
THAT'S RIGHT! AND WE HAVE PLENTY OF TREES RIGHT HERE.
WHY, WITH ALL THIS LUMBER, I'M SURE WE CAN FINISH THE HOUSE BEFORE WINTER!
NOW DON'T YOU THINK YER EXAGGERATING A BIT, NERA?
WE AIN'T EXACTLY THE LUMBERJACK TYPE. WINTER'D BE OVER BY THE T ME WE COULD PROCESS ALL THEM TREES
HMM... MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
IF IT'S CUT LUMBER YOU NEED...
...I CAN HELP YOU OUT.
ASHLEY!
HOWDY, NERA.
NERA, LOOK!
ASHLEY GAVE ME A RIDE!
ISN'T IT GREAT?!

THE ONLY PART OF HIS EMPIRE MY FATHER LETS ME HANDLE...
...IS HIS LUMBER BUSINESS, SO THERE'LL BE NO PROBLEM HELPING YOU, NERA
IT'S NOT YOUR MEANS THAT WORRY ME.
IF THE TOWNSFOLK FIND OUT YOU'RE HELPING US BUILD A HOUSE...
...HOW DO YOU THINK THEY'LL REACT?
OF COURSE. YOU'RE RIGHT. THEY'LL DO WHATEVER MY FATHER WANTS
I'M SORRY, NERA... I...
SEE, ASHLEY, HOW THE WIND PASSES THROUGH THIS PLACE?
IT FEELS AS IF YOU COULD CAPTURE IT IF YOU JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND SPREAD OUT YOUR HANDS
SHALL I TELL YOU A SECRET?
THE NAME WINDTALE... I GAVE IT TO THIS PLACE A LONG TIME AGO.
"AT
I TOLD IT TO THE FIRST PEOPLE WHO SETTLED HERE. I WHISPERED TO THEM...
...IN A VOICE SO SMALL THAT EVEN GOD COULD NOT HEAR.

THAT THE NAME OF THIS PLACE...
...IS WINDTALE.

CHAK!!
SKITTER
SNIK!

THWACK!
!!
WAIT, IVAN!
YOU WILL KNOW IT IS TIME TO ACT WHEN YOUR BODY IS HEALED.
!!
HEH HEH HEH
THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY BELIAL

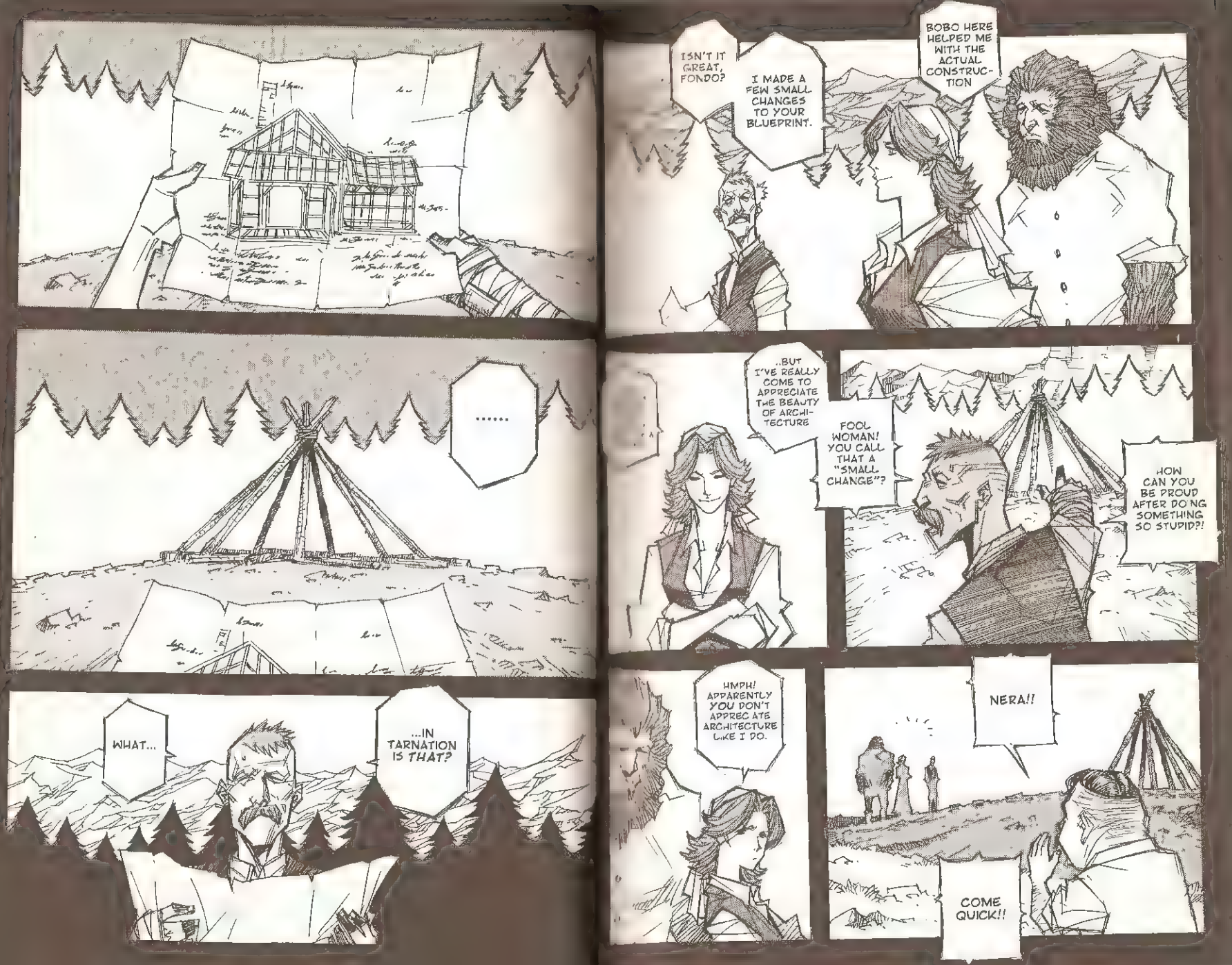

I CAN'T MOVE A STEP WITHOUT THIS DAMN STAFF
AND THE WOUND I RECEIVED FROM ARMAND
DO** STO BLEEDIN
BUT EVEN THOUGH YOU TELL ME TO WAIT
EVEN THOUGH I AM TORN TO PIECES
THIS WRETCHED BODY OF MINE
KEEPS PRESSING ME TO FIGHT
AS IF LOSING MY SOUL WASN'T ENOUGH.
IT SEEMS I'VE REACHED THE POINT WHERE I CAN'T EVEN CONTROL MY OWN BODY
HEH HEH HOW PATHETIC
DO YOU FEAR THE COMING BATTLE, IVAN?
AL BELIAL
I FEAR WHAT COMES AFTERWARD -
PEACE

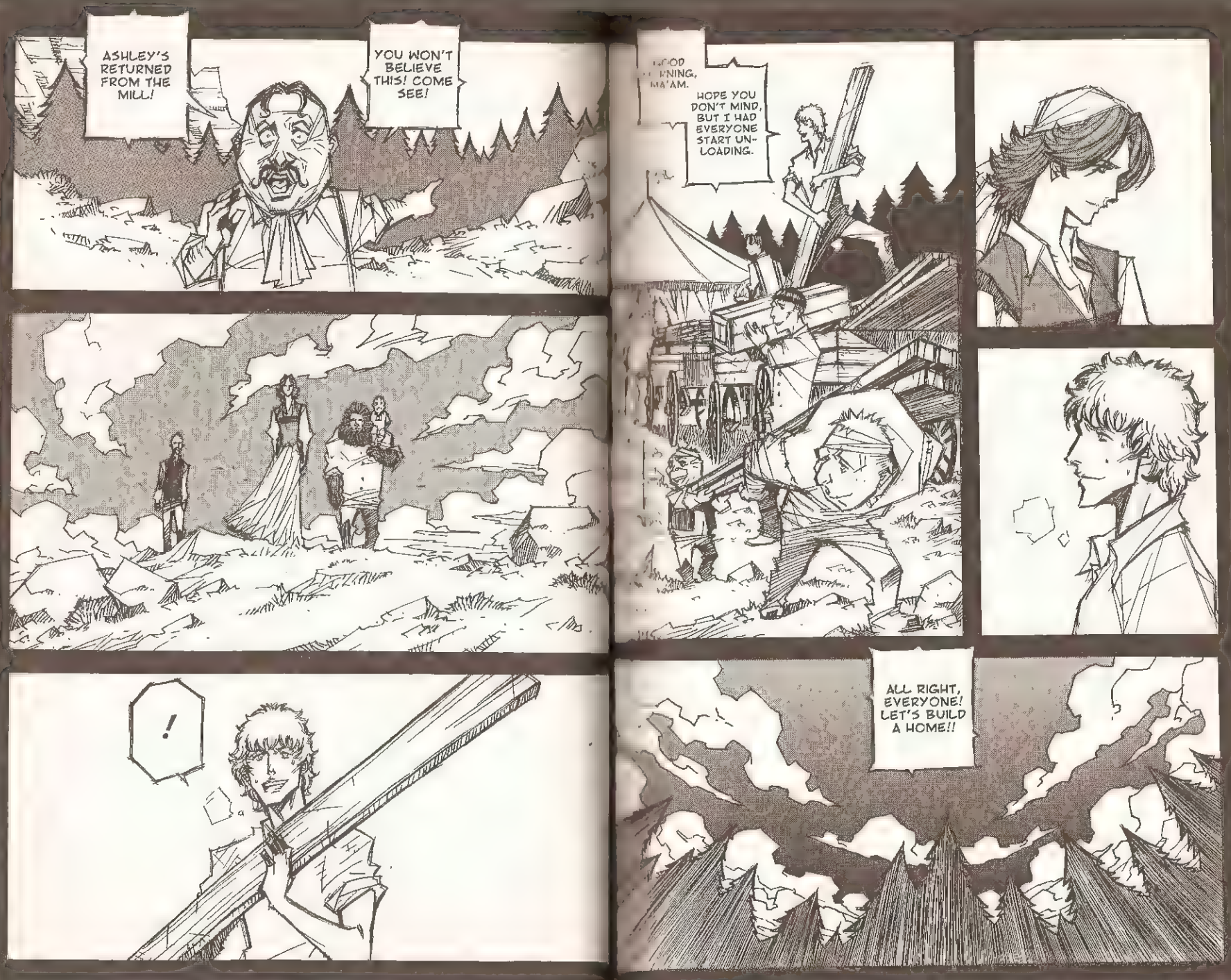
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID, MR. DUDLEY.
GO
OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS...
...THERE HAVE BEEN DISCREP-ANCIES IN THE BOOKS FOR THE LUMBER MILL.
TMP!
AND IT'S NOT JUST THE MILL.
IT SEEMS THE BOY HAS BEEN ALTERING THE BOOKS AT THE GENERAL STORE TOO, AND--
ENOUGH!
SIR?
YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT.
NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF MY OFFICE.

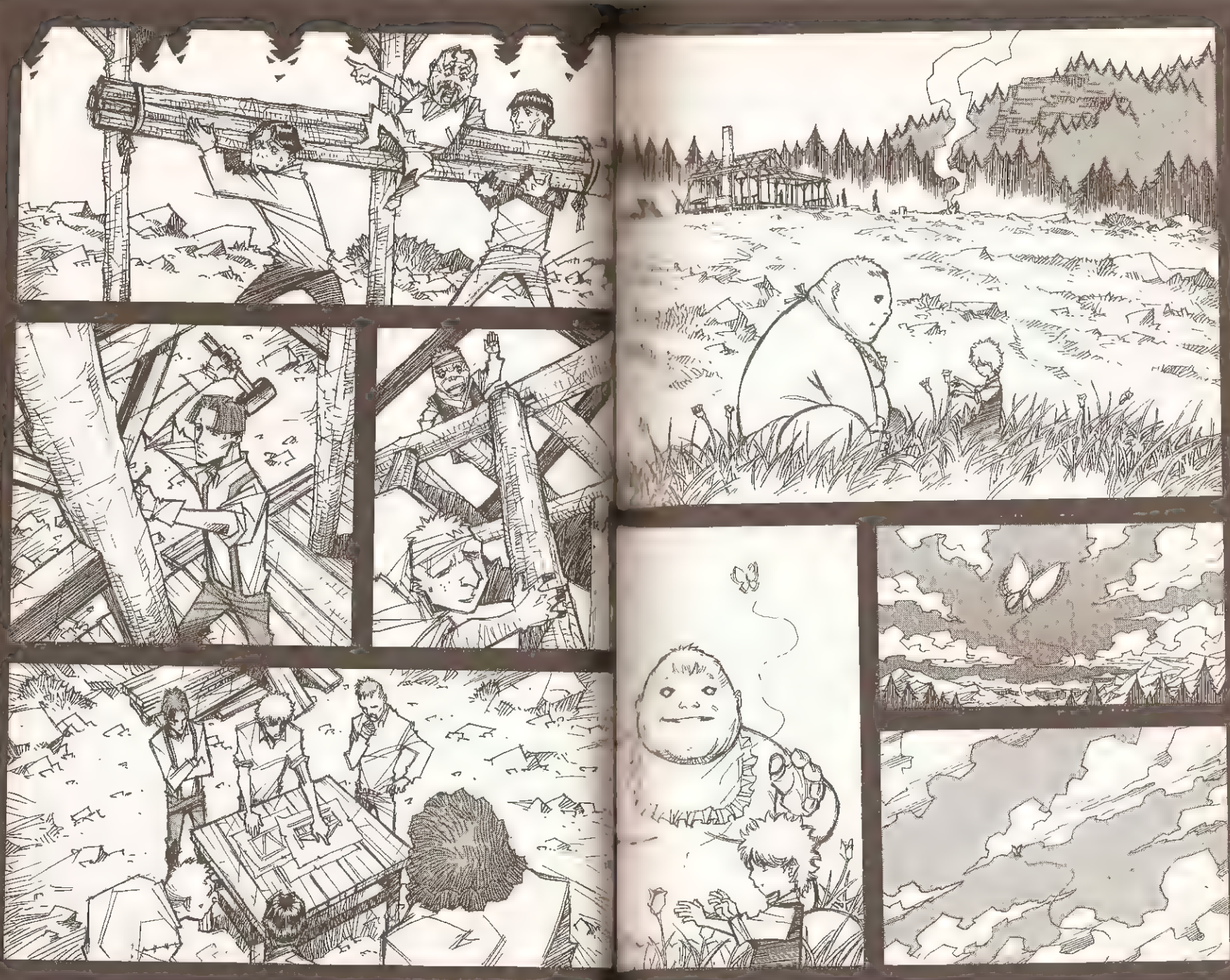
CLICK
O'NEIL!
I'M A GENEROUS MAN.
THAT CARAVAN OF FREAKS KNOWS HOW WE FEEL ABOUT THEM, AND IF THEY STILL WANT TO TRADE HERE, LET THEM TRY
HELL, I DON'T EVEN MIND IF THEY BUILD THAT CABIN, JUST AS LONG AS THEY KEEP IT WELL OUTSIDE OF TOWN.
BUT I'LL BE GUTTED BY AN INJUN BEFORE I LET ANY SON OF MINE CONSORT WITH A GYPSY WHORE.
CLAK
I UNDERSTAND, MR. DUDLEY.
O'NEIL!
I'M SURE A SHARP FELLOW LIKE YOURSELF DOESN'T NEED REMINDING...
...BUT BEFORE YOU GO, I WANT TO MAKE ONE THING CLEAR.
YES, MR. DUDLEY?
YOU TOUCH ONE HAIR ON MY BOY ASHLEY'S HEAD...
...AND YOU'LL FIND A SHOTGUN BARREL SO FAR UP YOUR ASS, YOU'LL BE BEGGING ME TO PULL THE TRIGGER.

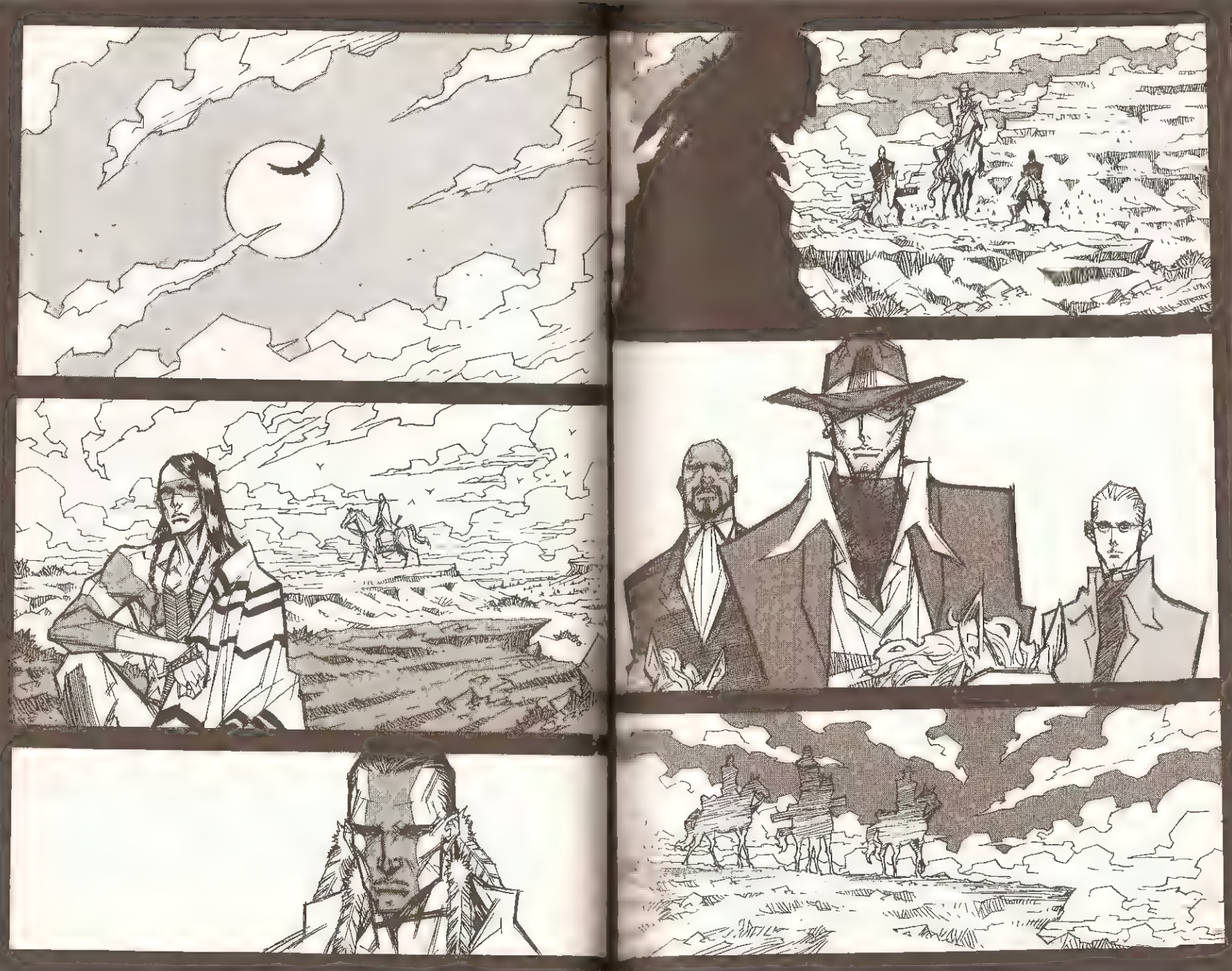
O'NEIL?
TIME TO RIDE, ANGELO
HOPE YOU'RE READY FOR SOME FUN.
WE'RE GOING TO THE CIRCUS!
KZSH
!

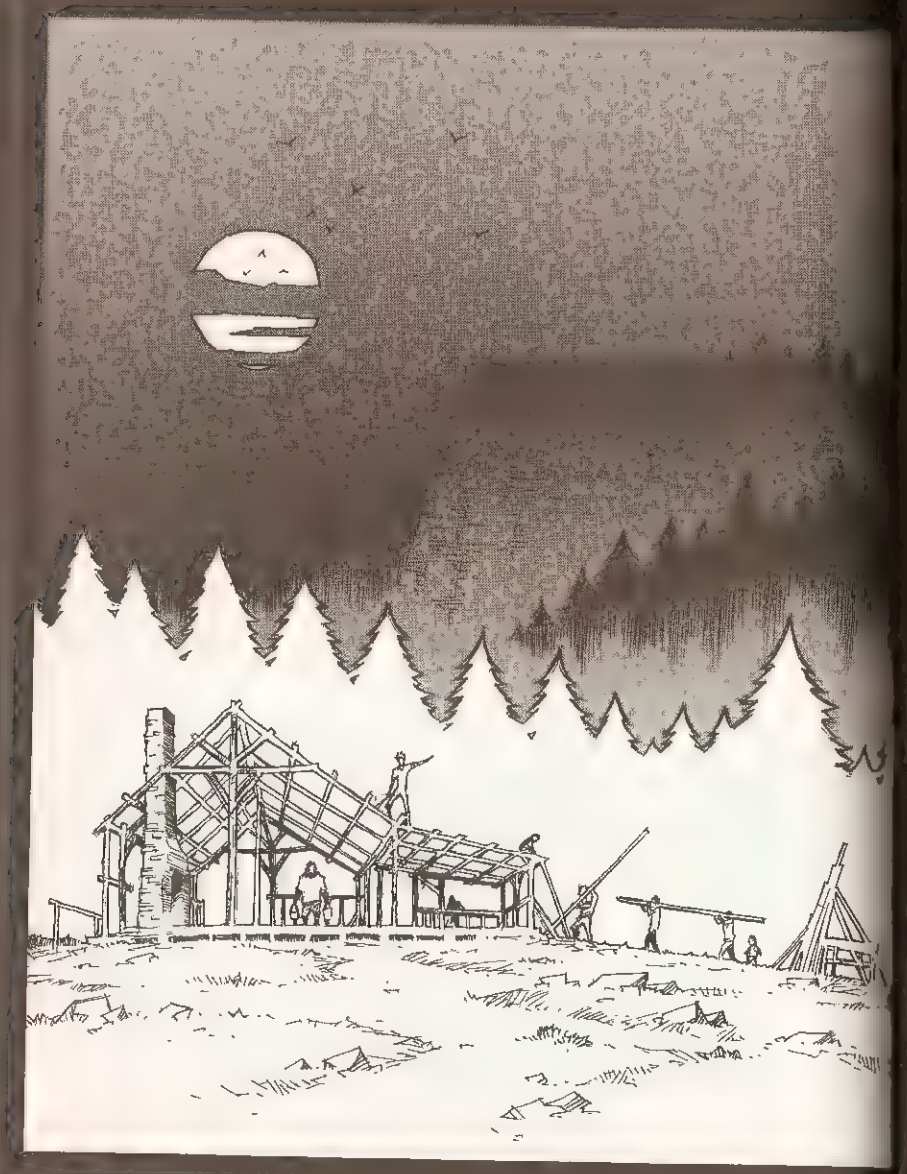
Y-
...S, MR. RIPLEY?!
IN THE PAST FEW DAYS...
...HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY UNUSUAL VISITORS IN TOWN? RELIGIOUS TYPES, PERHAPS?
WELL, SIR...
YESTER-DAY THERE WERE SOME FUNNY-LOOKING MONKS PASSIN' THROUGH.
SAID THEY WERE ON SOME KINDA PIL-GR MAGE TO THAT OL' MONASTERY 'N ASTON. IT DIDN'T SEEM L KE ANY-THING WORTH BOTHERIN' YOU ABOJT. .
OFFICE! NOW!
SANTINO!
...A PROB-LEM, S R?
NO, SANTINO. NO PROB-LEM AT ALL.
.....


ISN'T IT GREAT, FONDO?
I MADE A FEW SMALL CHANGES TO YOUR BLUEPRINT.
BOBO HERE HELPED ME WITH THE ACTUAL CONSTRUC-TION
.....
..BUT I'VE REALLY COME TO APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF ARCHI-TECTURE
FOOL WOMAN! YOU CALL THAT A "SMALL CHANGE"?
HOW CAN YOU BE PROUD AFTER DOING SOMETHING SO STUPID?!
WHAT...
...IN TARNATION IS THAT?
UMPH! APPARENTLY YOU DON'T APPREC ATE ARCHITECTURE LIKE I DO.
NERA!!
COME QUICK!!

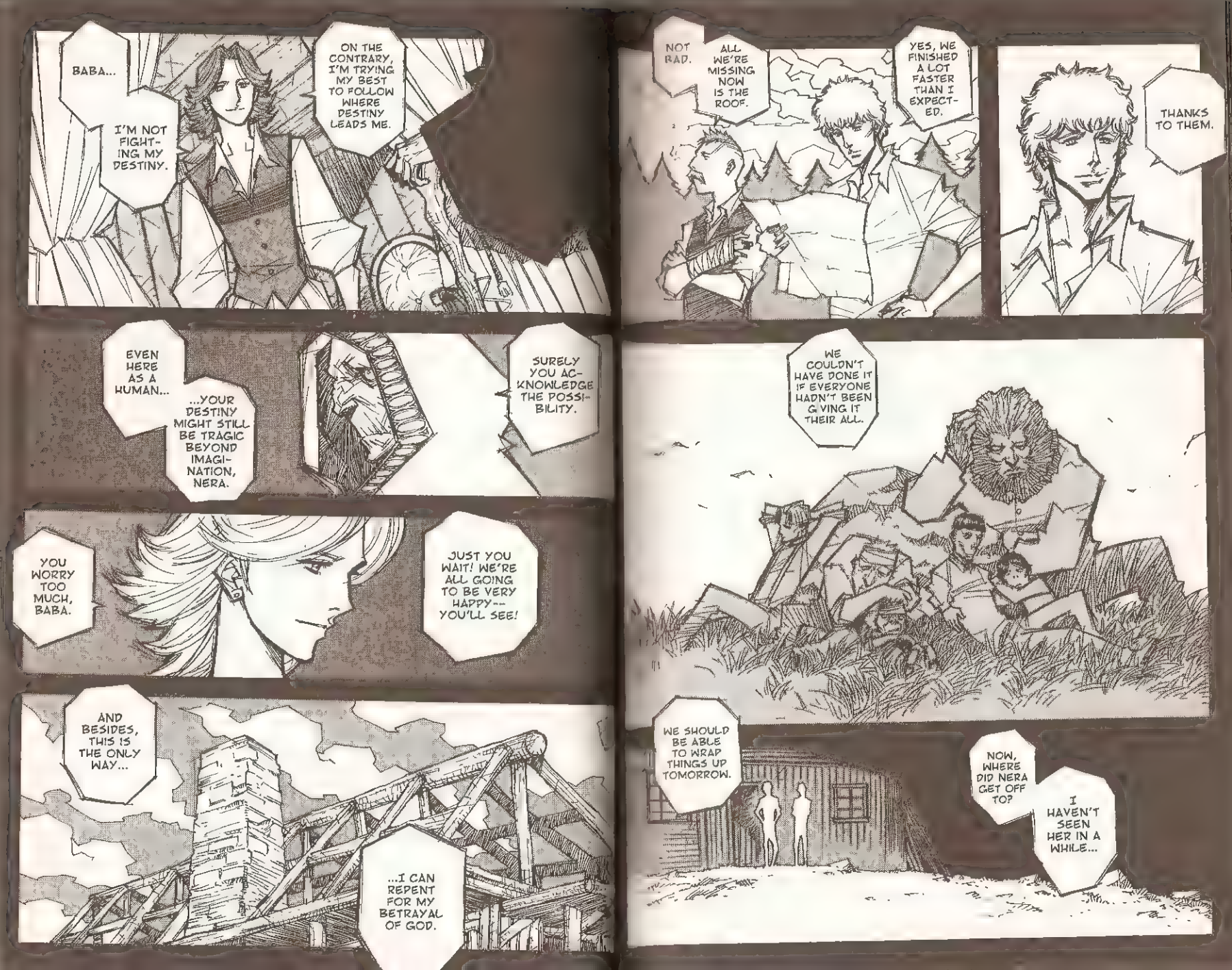

ASHLEY'S RETURNED FROM THE MILL!
YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS! COME SEE!
GOOD MORNING, MA'AM.
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, BUT I HAD EVERYONE START UNLOADING.
!
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE! LET'S BUILD A HOME!!







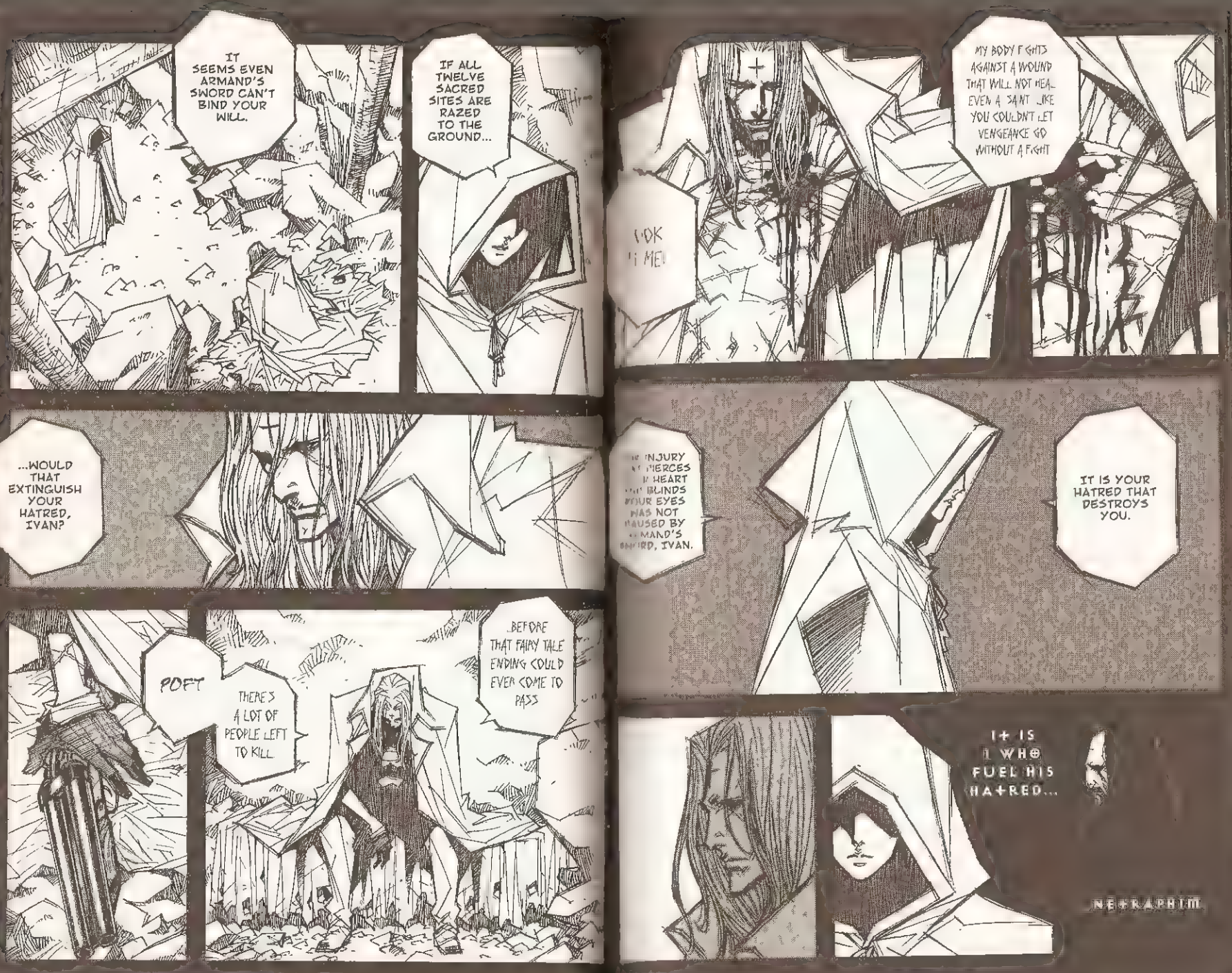
THEY SAY THAT THERE IS A TIME TO WEEP AND A TIME TO LAUGH...
...BUT FOR HEARTS THAT HAVE ONLY KNOWN SORROW, LAUGHTER IS A FRIGHTENING THING.
I KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE TOO MANY CUSTOMERS, BABA, BUT YOU STILL NEED TO CLEAN YOUR CRYSTAL BALL!
EEEK!!
OOOPS!
...!!
SLIP
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
PUT THAT DOWN RIGHT NOW!
NERA...
THOSE CHILDREN HAVE NEVER KNOWN JOY LIKE THIS BEFORE.
THEY WILL BE EVEN MORE MISERABLE WHEN THINGS GO BACK TO HOW THEY WERE.
IF THOSE CHILDREN ARE SACRIFICED BECAUSE YOU REFUSE TO FACE YOUR DESTINY--
I HAVE... FAITH.
IN HUMANITY, IN GOD... AND IN HIM.

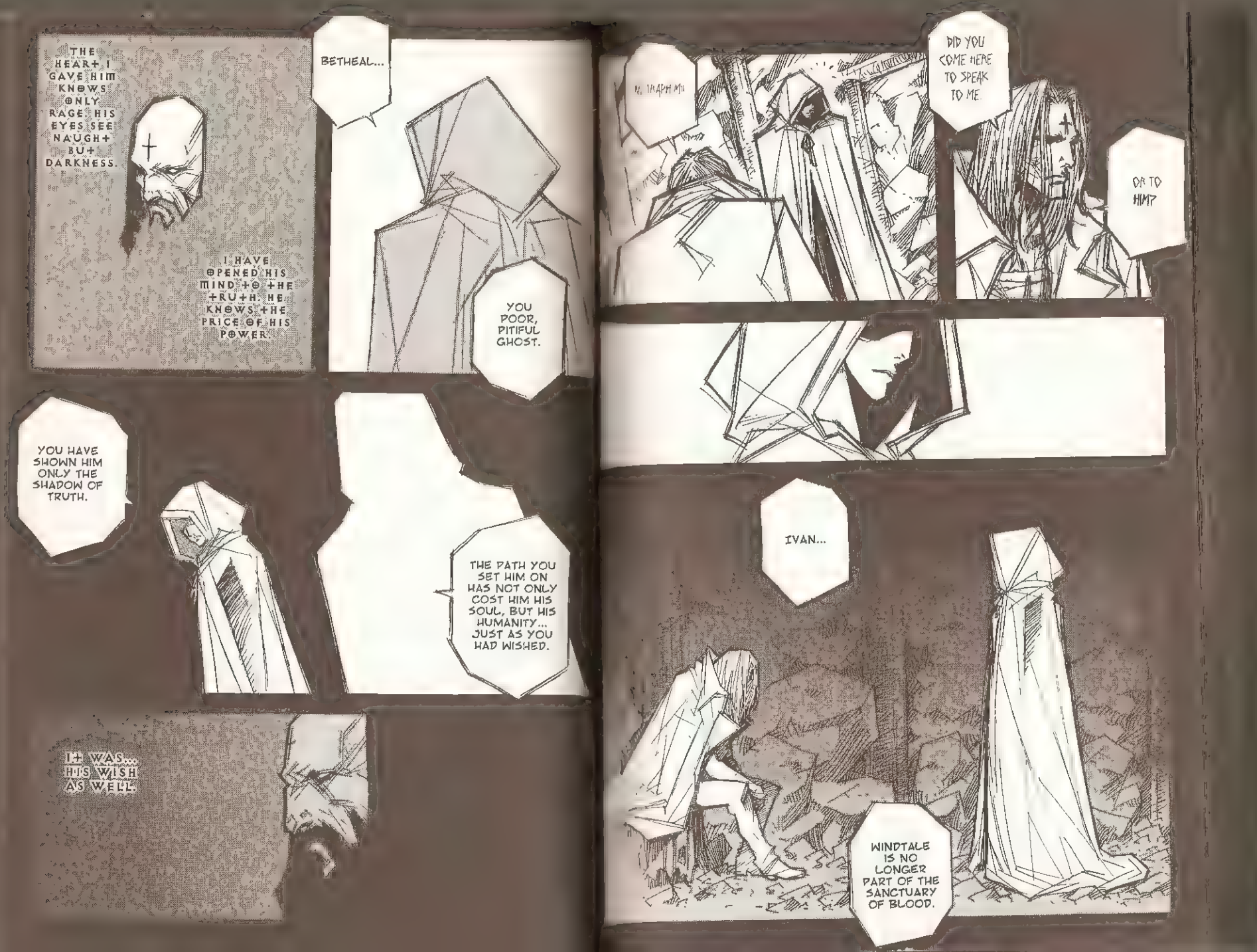

BABA...
I'M NOT FIGHTING MY DESTINY.
ON THE CONTRARY, I'M TRYING MY BEST TO FOLLOW WHERE DESTINY LEADS ME.
EVEN HERE AS A HUMAN...
...YOUR DESTINY MIGHT STILL BE TRAGIC BEYOND IMAGINATION, NERA.
SURELY YOU ACKNOWLEDGE THE POSSIBILITY.
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH, BABA.
JUST YOU WAIT! WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE VERY HAPPY--YOU'LL SEE!
AND BESIDES, THIS IS THE ONLY WAY...
...I CAN REPENT FOR MY BETRAYAL OF GOD.
NOT BAD.
ALL WE'RE MISSING NOW IS THE ROOF.
YES, WE FINISHED A LOT FASTER THAN I EXPECTED.
THANKS TO THEM.
WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT IF EVERYONE HADN'T BEEN G VING IT THEIR ALL.
WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO WRAP THINGS UP TOMORROW.
NOW, WHERE DID NERA GET OFF TO?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER IN A WHILE...

NEIGH!

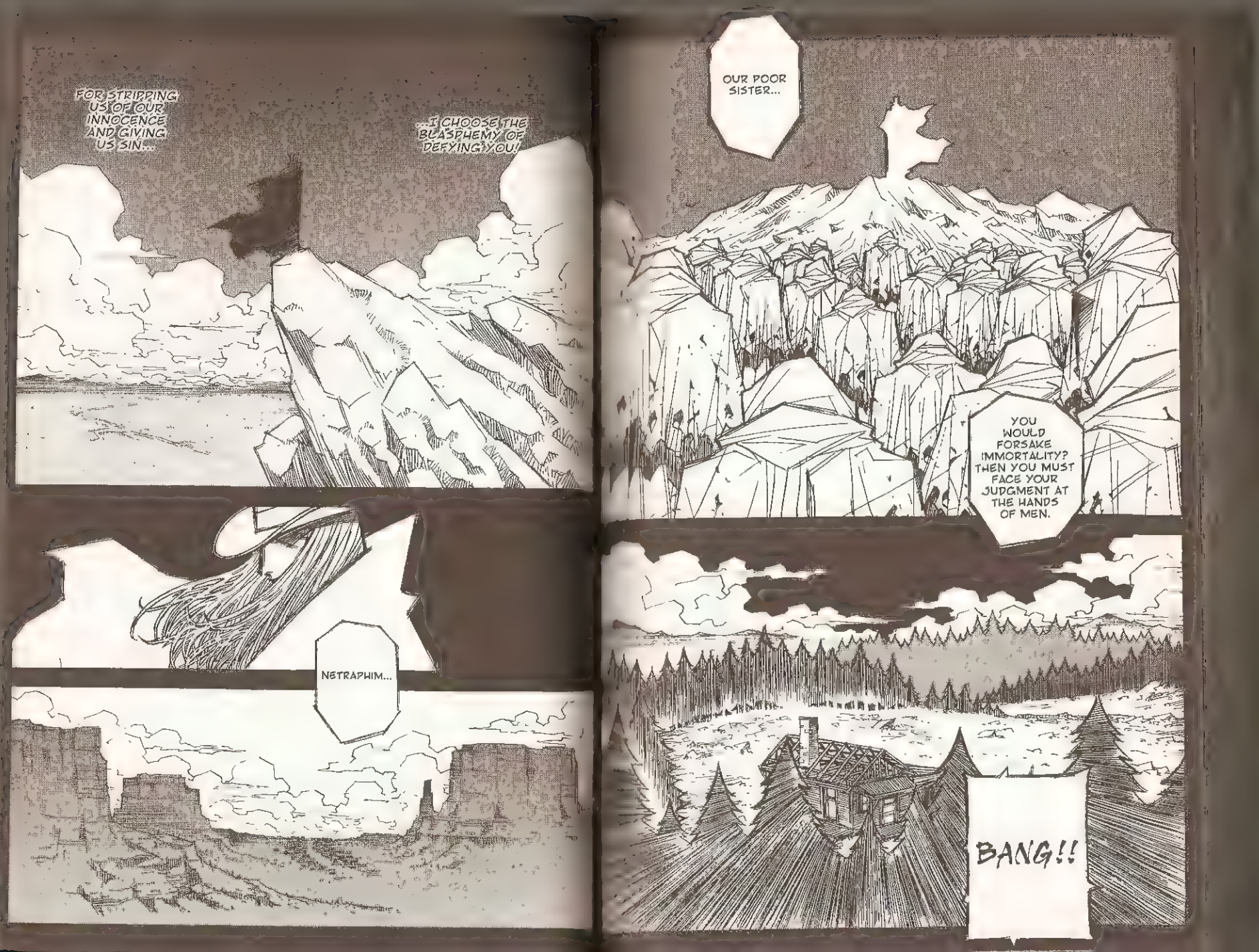
YOU DON'T NEED TO FOLLOW ME, BENDO.
DON'T WORRY. I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
!
CLICK!

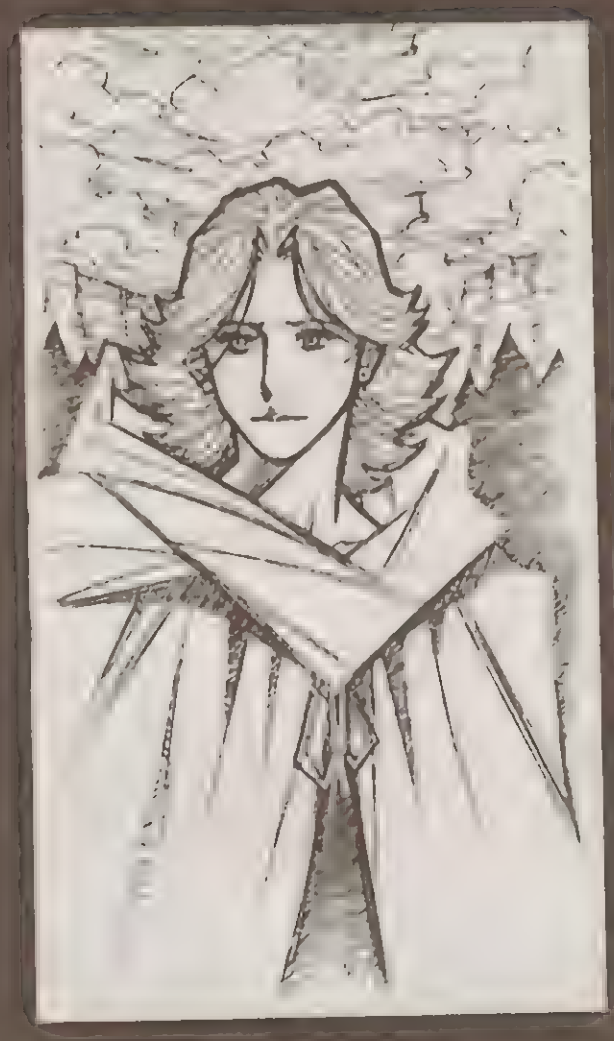
GRRRR!
SHNIK!
SHNK!
GRRRR!
STAY YOUR WEAPON, HALF-KNIGHT.
I CAME HERE TO TALK.
WOULD BE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THAT BEAST YOU HEALED IF I WERE YOU. NEVER KNOW WHEN IT MIGHT DECIDE TO BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS IT

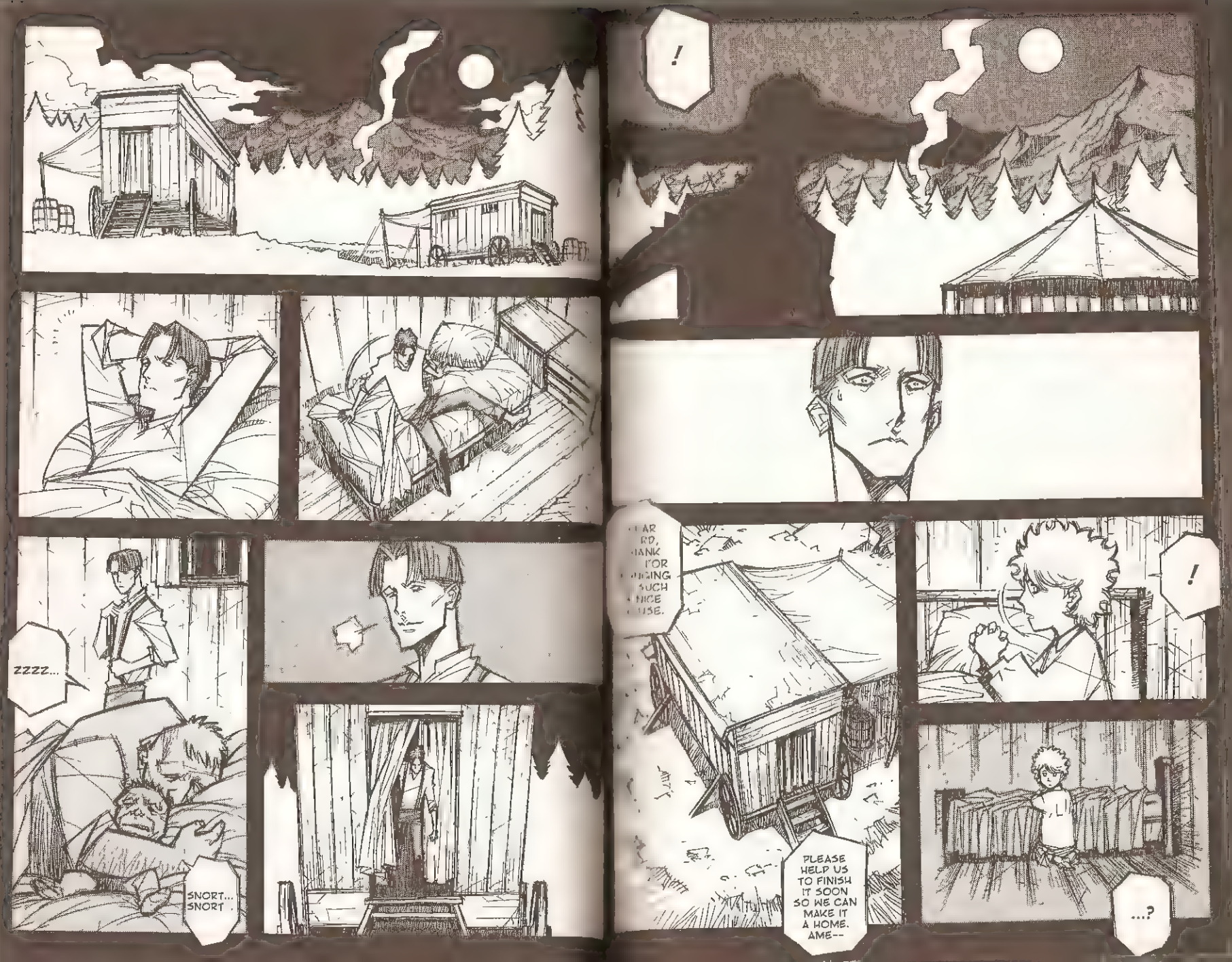

IT SEEMS EVEN ARMAND'S SWORD CAN'T BIND YOUR WILL.
IF ALL TWELVE SACRED SITES ARE RAZED TO THE GROUND...
...WOULD THAT EXTINGUISH YOUR HATRED, IVAN?
POFT
THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE LEFT TO KILL
...BEFORE THAT FAIRY TALE ENDING COULD EVER COME TO PASS
MY BODY FIGHTS AGAINST A WOUND THAT WILL NOT HEAL. EVEN A SAINT LIKE YOU COULDN'T LET VENGEANCE GO WITHOUT A FIGHT
IT IS YOUR HATRED THAT DESTROYS YOU.
IT IS I WHO FUEL HIS HATRED...
SERAPHIM


THE HEART I GAVE HIM KNOWS ONLY RAGE. HIS EYES SEE NAUGHT BUT DARKNESS.
I HAVE OPENED HIS MIND TO THE TRUTH. HE KNOWS THE PRICE OF HIS POWER.
BETHEAL...
YOU POOR, PITIFUL GHOST.
YOU HAVE SHOWN HIM ONLY THE SHADOW OF TRUTH.
THE PATH YOU SET HIM ON HAS NOT ONLY COST HIM HIS SOUL, BUT HIS HUMANITY... JUST AS YOU HAD WISHED.
IT WAS... HIS WISH AS WELL.
M. TRAPH MU
DID YOU COME HERE TO SPEAK TO ME
OR TO HIM?
IVAN...
WINDTALE IS NO LONGER PART OF THE SANCTUARY OF BLOOD.

I FOR-SAKE ALL POWER THAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO ME AS A DISCIPLE OF [illegible]
FROM THIS MOMENT ON, I CHOOSE TO LIVE AS A HUMAN-- [illegible] AND POWERLESS.
AS MY [illegible] WANES...
...SO TOO DOES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WINDTALE.
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WANTED, IVAN?
THE DESTRUC-TION OF [illegible]?
[illegible] OF [illegible] FIED GOD
NOW I SHALL DEFY HIM

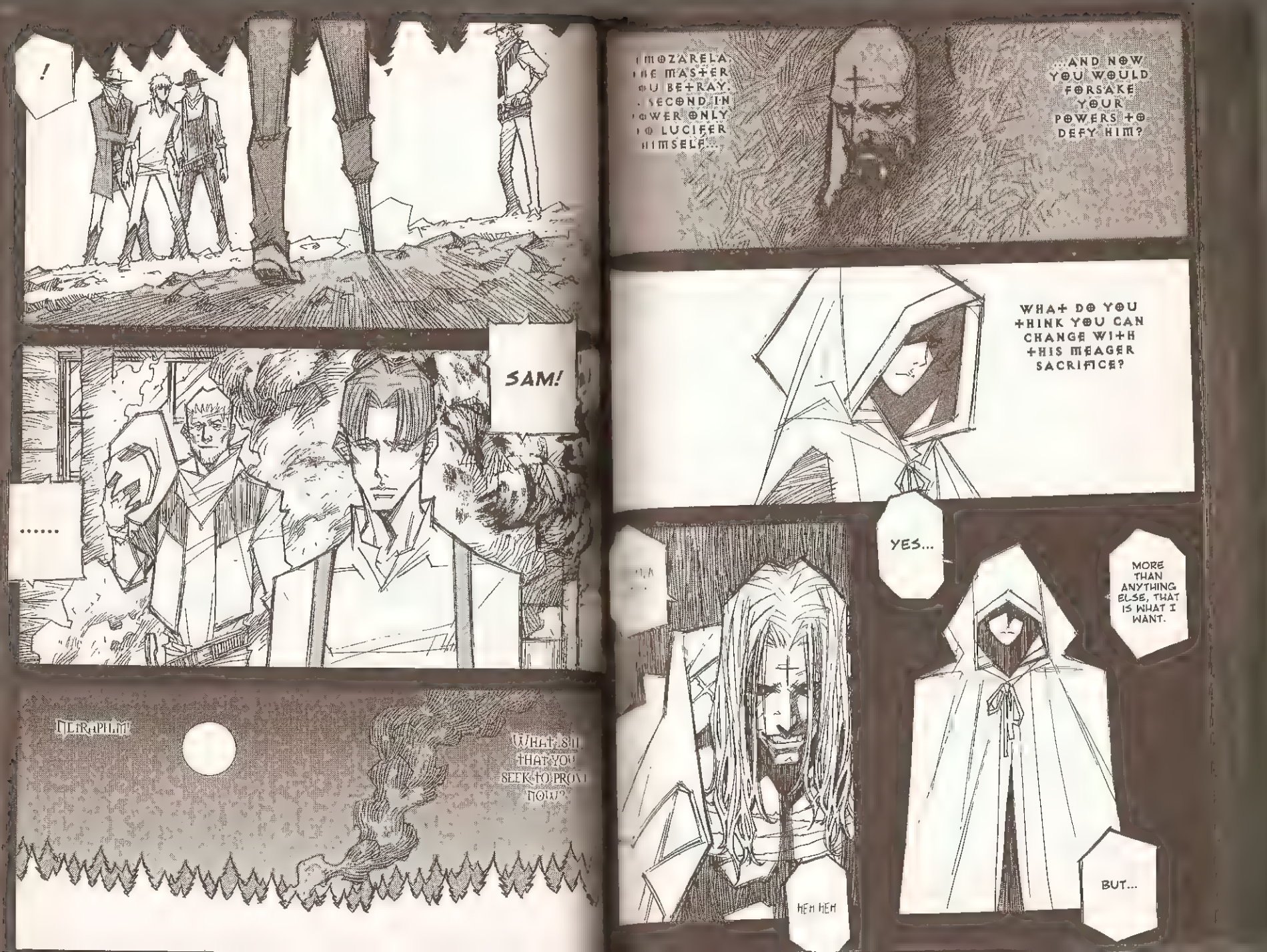

FOR STRIPPING US OF OUR INNOCENCE AND GIVING US SIN...
...I CHOOSE THE BLASPHEMY OF DEFYING YOU!
NETRAPHIM...
OUR POOR SISTER...
YOU WOULD FORSAKE IMMORTALITY? THEN YOU MUST FACE YOUR JUDGMENT AT THE HANDS OF MEN.
BANG!!




!
ZZZZ...
SNORT... SNORT
!
PLEASE HELP US TO FINISH IT SOON SO WE CAN MAKE IT A HOME. AME--
...?

GOD-DAMMIT!
!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!
WAIT! YOU'RE FROM...
!
IF IT AIN'T THE PRODIGAL SON HIMSELF.
PLAYIN' HOUSE WITH SOFT-BRAINS NOW, ARE YOU?

ISN'T IT TIME YOU GAVE UP THESE BABY GAMES?
O'NEIL!!
WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS WRONG!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA...
...HOW MUCH THIS PLACE MEANS TO THESE PEOPLE?
HEH HEH HEH...
WHAT ARE THOSE FREAKS GONNA DO WITH A HOUSE?
HUH?
DID YOU THINK SECRETLY BUILDING THIS PLACE WOULD CHANGE ANYTHING?
THEY SURE DID WORK HARD ON THIS PLACE, DIDN'T THEY?
AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE THEY WENT THROUGH, MIGHT AS WELL LET THEM KEEP IT, RIGHT?
LEMME GUESS..
THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING YOUR DADDY TO SAY, WEREN'T YOU...YOU NAIVE COCK-SUCKER?
SORRY TO BREAK IT TO YOU...
...BUT THAT JUST AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN.
SEEMS YOUR FRIEND HERE...
...UNDER-STANDS THAT FACT MUCH BETTER THAN YOU.
WHAT?


!
SAM!
.....
MOZARELA, THE MASTER OF BETRAY. SECOND IN POWER ONLY TO LUCIFER HIMSELF...
...AND NOW YOU WOULD FORSAKE YOUR POWERS TO DEFY HIM?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU CAN CHANGE WITH THIS MEAGER SACRIFICE?
YES...
MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THAT IS WHAT I WANT.
BUT...
HEH HEH
PURGATORY
WHAT IS THAT YOU SEEK TO PROVE NOW?

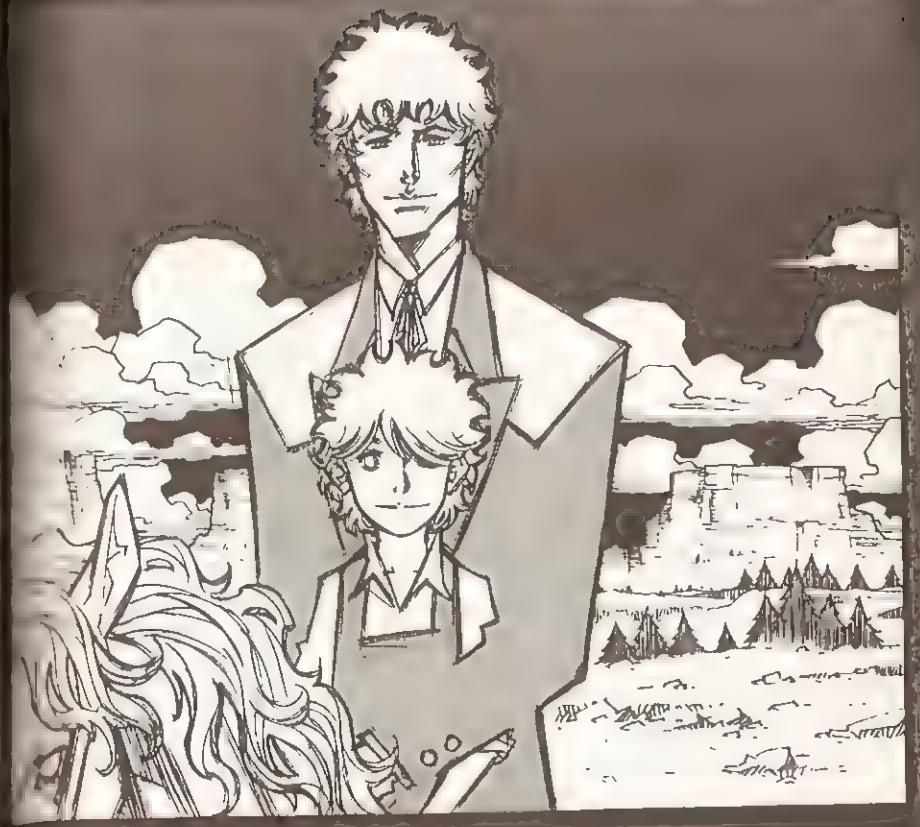
...I DO NOT EXPECT TO FIND ON THIS EARTH...
...SOMETHING I COULDN'T EVEN FIND IN THE HEAVENS.
BUT...
SAM!!
YOU... KNEW ABOUT THIS?!
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!!
RELAX, ASHLEY.
HE ONLY RECENTLY CAME TO HIS SENSES.
SO DON'T BE TOO HARSH ON HIM.
ONCE I SAT DOWN AND HAD A CHAT WITH HIM, WE UNDERSTOOD EACH OTHER QUITE WELL.
HE DECIDED TO HELP US OUT WITH THE SITUATION HERE.
SAM... WHAT IS HE SAYING?!
IT'S...
AW, ENOUGH!
WE ALL GAVE IT OUR BEST SHOT... ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?

EVEN IF WE FINISHED THE HOUSE...
...IT'S NOT AS IF THE TOWNSFOLK WOULD LET US STAY HERE.
SO MAYBE THINGS WOULD BE DIFFICULT...
...BUT HOW CAN YOU JUST GIVE UP LIKE THAT?!
THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT CAN'T BE DONE NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY!
GODDAMMIT! WHAT WOULD A RICH BRAT LIKE YOU KNOW ABOUT HARDSHIP?!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW HARD OUR LIVES ARE!
NERA...
I DON'T WANT TO BURDEN NERA ANYMORE EITHER!
NERA WILL UNDERSTAND. IN THE END, IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.
SHE DOESN'T NEED A MAN LIKE YOU FILLING HER HEAD WITH FAIRY TALE NOTIONS.
SHE'S ALREADY GOT SOMEONE WHO CAN TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER.
YOU... YOU DID ALL THIS...
...BECAUSE OF THAT?!
YOU'D NEVER...

ARE YOU SAYING A CRIPPLE LIKE ME...
...ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR NERA?
SAM...
HOW QUAINT-- A LOVE TRIANGLE.
HEH HEH I DON'T MEAN TO BUTT IN, BUT I HAVE MY OWN BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF, YOU KNOW.
YOUR FATHER?
SORRY TO BREAK IT TO YOU, ASHLEY, BUT WHO DO YOU THINK ORDERED THIS?
THE SOONER YOU LEARN THAT, THE BETTER.
YOU SWINE!!
LITTLE PRINCE...
ISN'T IT TIME YOU GREW UP?
RUSTLE
WELL, WELL.
LOOKS LIKE WE GOT OUR-SELVES A SPY.

!
ASHLEY!
ASHLEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?
!!
STOP!!
HER EYES, SHE'S
WE DON'T WANT TOO MANY WITNESSES ...
CLICK

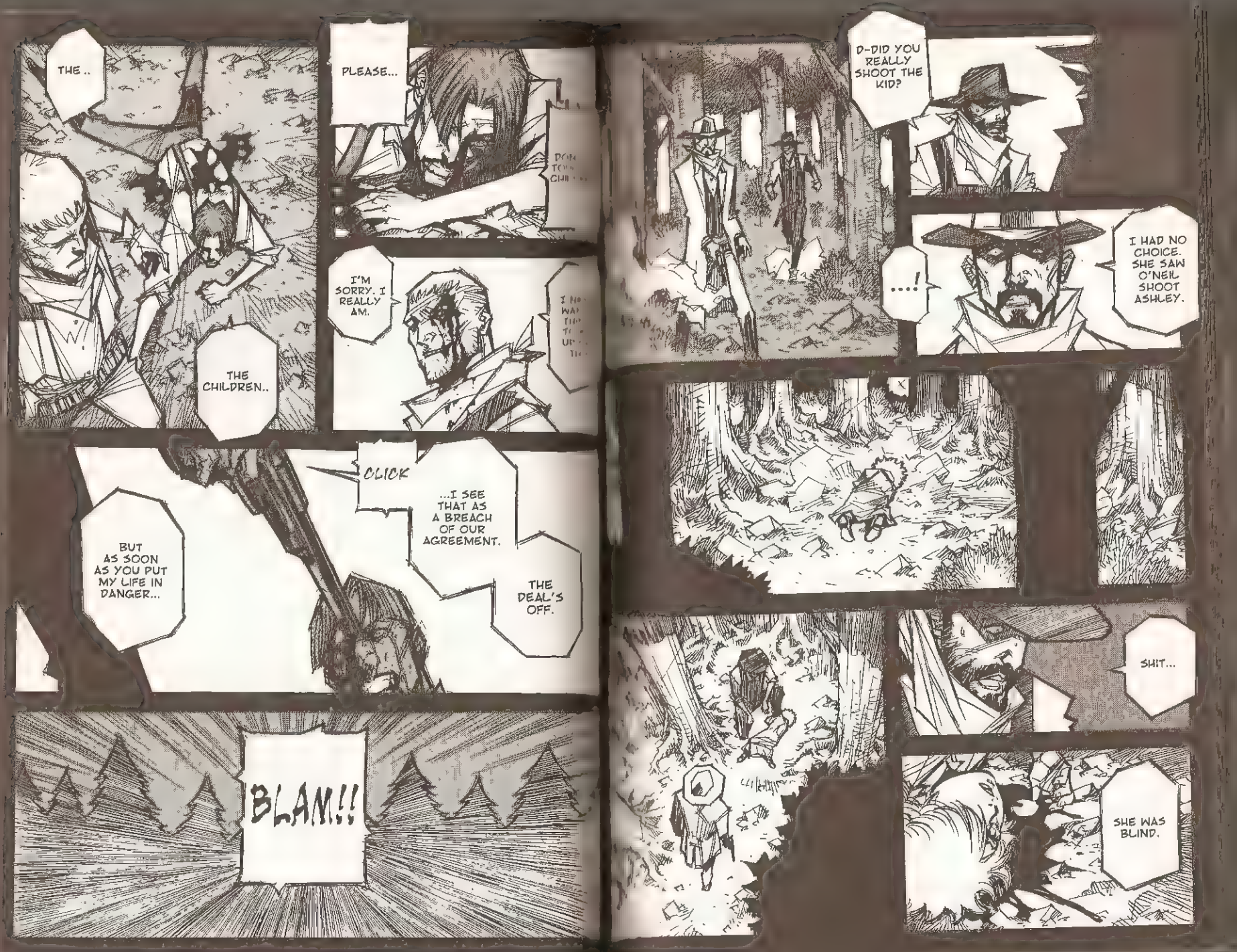
...
ASHLEY? I HEARD A GUNSHOT.
WHAT HAP-PENED?!
ASHLEY ...?
NERA...



ASHLEY!!
ASHLEY!!
THE BOY GOT SHOT
FUCK ME!!
ASHLEY!
ASHLEY!
O'NEIL!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHEN BOSS FINDS OUT...
TMP

THWACK!!
JUST RUN!!
NOW!!
S--
SAM ...?
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! R--
STUPID GIRL!!
BLAM!!
...!
DANA!!
RUN!!

DAMMIT...WHY ARE THINGS ALWAYS SO COMPLICATED?
BETTER TIE UP AS MANY LOOSE ENDS AS I CAN.
SORRY, LITTLE GIRL. GOT NO CHOICE.
I...
I... BEG... YOU...
!
FUCK!
CRIPPLED SON OF A BITCH HIT ME!!
O'NEIL!
THE GIRL!


THE ..
THE CHILDREN..
PLEASE...
I'M SORRY. I REALLY AM.
BUT AS SOON AS YOU PUT MY LIFE IN DANGER...
CLICK
...I SEE THAT AS A BREACH OF OUR AGREEMENT.
THE DEAL'S OFF.
BLAM!!
D-DID YOU REALLY SHOOT THE KID?
...!
I HAD NO CHOICE. SHE SAW O'NEIL SHOOT ASHLEY.
SHIT...
SHE WAS BLIND.

HEAD TO THE CARAVAN WHERE THE FREAKS ARE SLEEPING...
...AND GRAB THE TWO STUPIDEST ONES YOU CAN FIND.
AS FOR THE REST OF THEM, SHOOT THE UGLY BASTARDS.
GET MOVING!!
OH SHIT, OH SHIT... WHAT DO WE DO NOW, O'NEIL?
DAMN...
IF MR DUDLEY FINDS OUT ASHLEY'S DEAD WE'RE
CHILL THE FUCK DOWN. IF WE STAY CALM, WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS JUST FINE.
NOW, KEEP ALERT AND DO AS I TELL YOU!
SHIT...
YOU'RE A TROUBLE-SOME COCK-SUCKER, ASHLEY, EVEN WHEN YOU'RE DEAD.
BUT I DID WARN YOU, DIDN'T I?
YOU JUST GOT WHAT WAS COMIN' TO YOU.

...?
NETRAPHIM»
IM SURE YOU KNOW WITHOUT ME TELLING YOU.
BUT MY CONVALESCENCE ISN'T PERMANENT

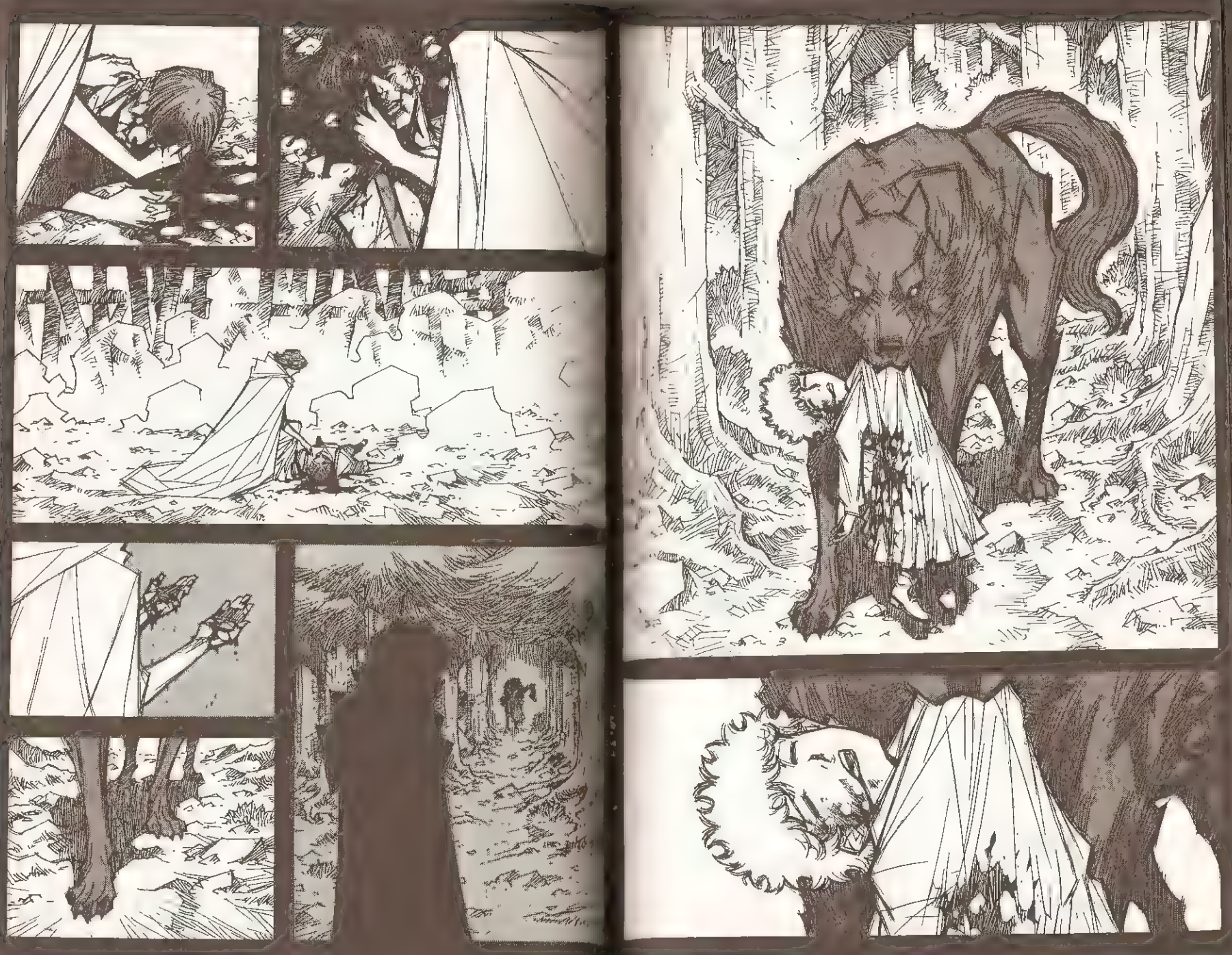
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT YOUR DREAMS OF HAPPY ENDINGS
I CAME TO THIS PLACE TO SEE IT DESTROYED WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS
AND NOTHING YOU DO WILL STOP ME FROM SEEING MY PLAN THROUGH
TAP
THE MOMENT YOU TAKE YOUR LAST BREATH
YOU'LL FEEL ME RIGHT BEHIND YOU
REGARDLESS OF
WHETHER YOU'RE AN ANGEL OR HUMAN
IVAN....N SOME WAYS WE ARE VERY MUCH ALIKE.
EVEN THOUGH HELL TSELF STANDS BETWEEN US AND OUR GOAL, WE STILL PRESS ON. BUT WHILE YOU MOVE ONLY BY THE MOMENTUM OF RAGE..
...I STILL HAVE HOPE.
THE WORD "HOPE"...
...MUST MEAN NOTHING TO YOU AT THIS POINT.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. MAYBE MY FAILURE IS FORE-ORDAINED...
.. BUT I'M STILL HAPPY BECAUSE I STILL HAVE THAT THING YOU ABANDONED LONG AGO

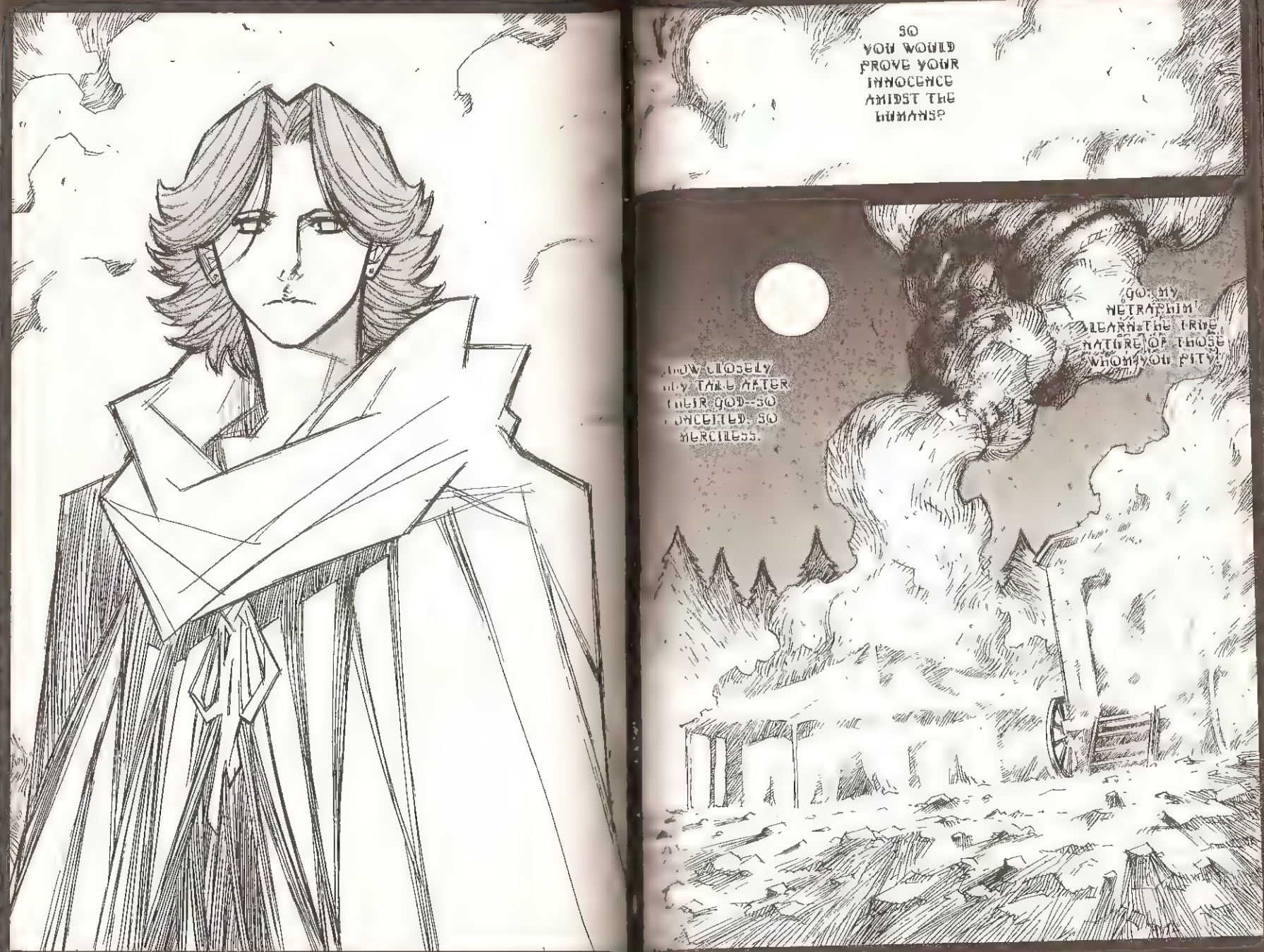
WHAT DO YOU FIGHT FOR, IVAN?

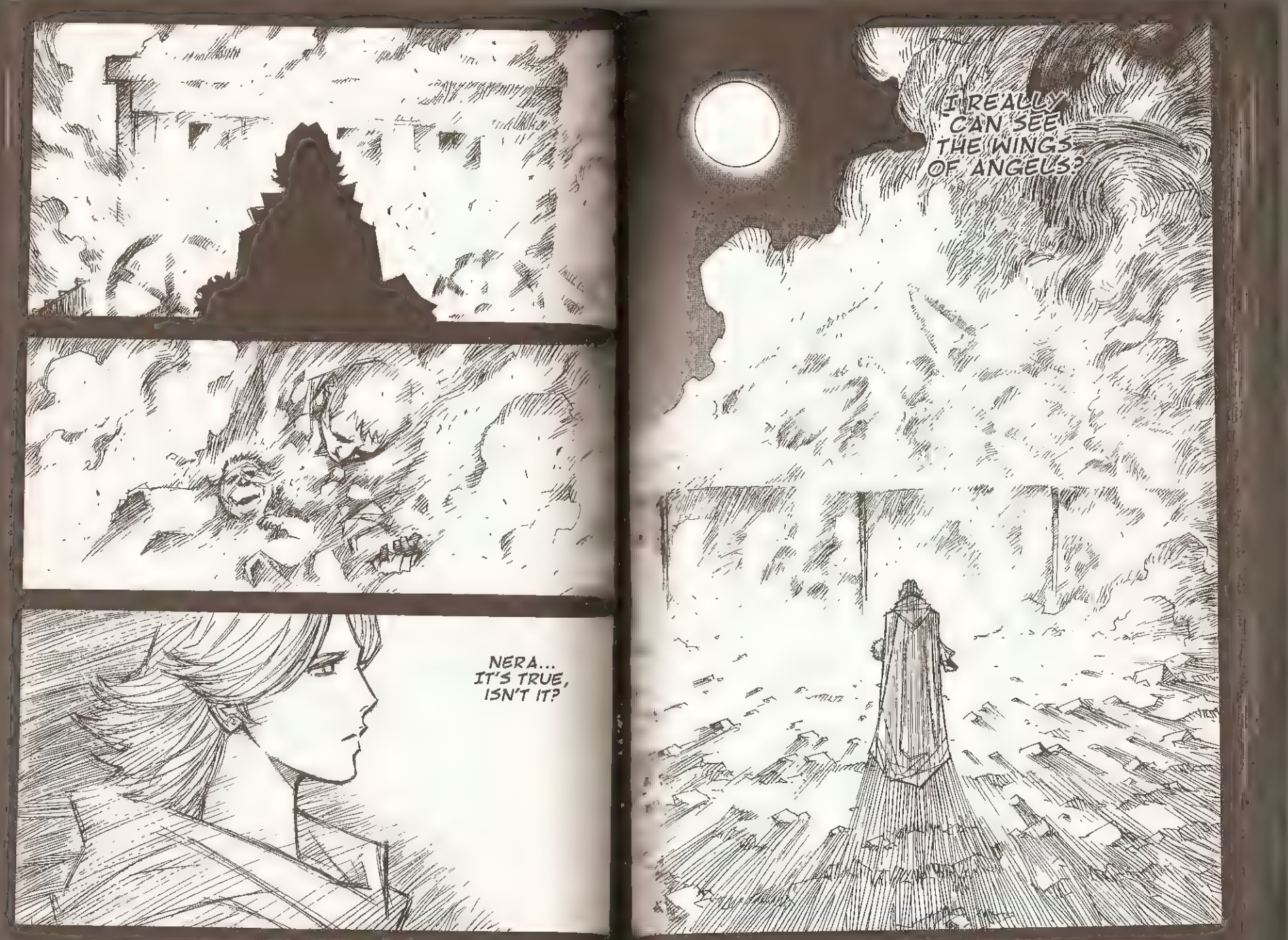
GASP!
HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!
B-BENDO...
I'M SORRY, BUT I THINK Y
SHOULD
ON AHEA
HUFF!
YES...
I CAN'T DO IT. NOT ANYMORE.
CLINK

BELIAL.
WHAT DOES NETRAPHIM MEAN TO TEMOZARELA?
TEMOZARELA PROBABLY WONDERS THAT HIMSELF. WHICH IS WHY HE CHOSE HER TO BE HIS DISCIPLE.
THAT SHE WAS ALLOWED TO LIVE AS SHE WAS...
...TESTIFIES TO TEMOZARELA'S CONTRADICTIONS AND PRIDE.
HEH HEH.. AMONG THE DISCIPLES OF TEMOZARELA
IS THERE ANYONE WHO ISN'T FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS.
IVAN
DO YOU PITY HER?
PITY?
SHE PITIED ME FIRST BELIAL.
BUT WHO SHOULD BE PITYING WHOM? I WONDER
WHUP
MY HALF-SOUL COMPANION..
THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO RESUME THE PILGRIMAGE.

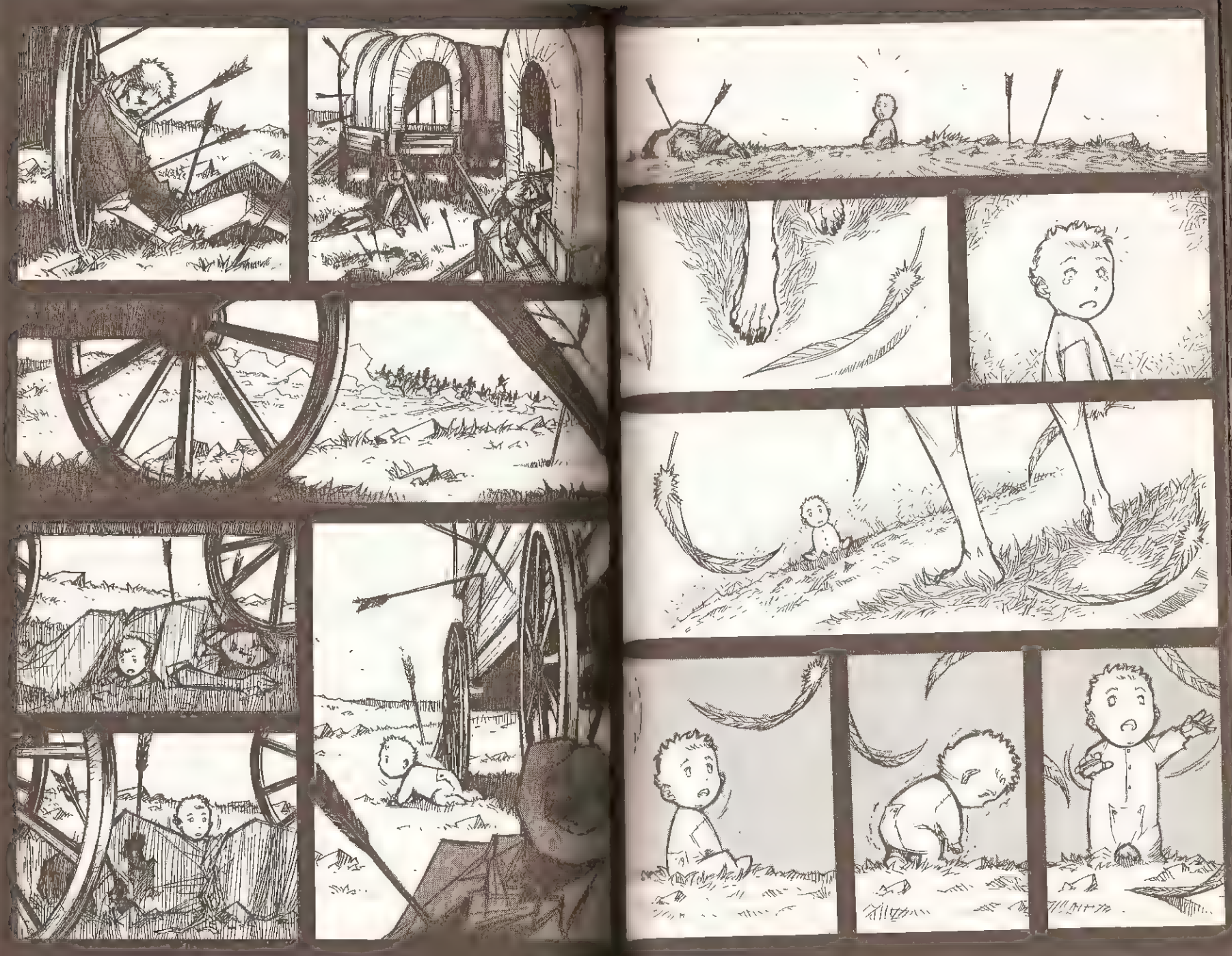
I KNEW WITHOUT YOU TELLING ME, BELIAL.
AS SOON AS NETRAPHIM LEFT,
MY WOUND CEASED ITS BLEEDING.



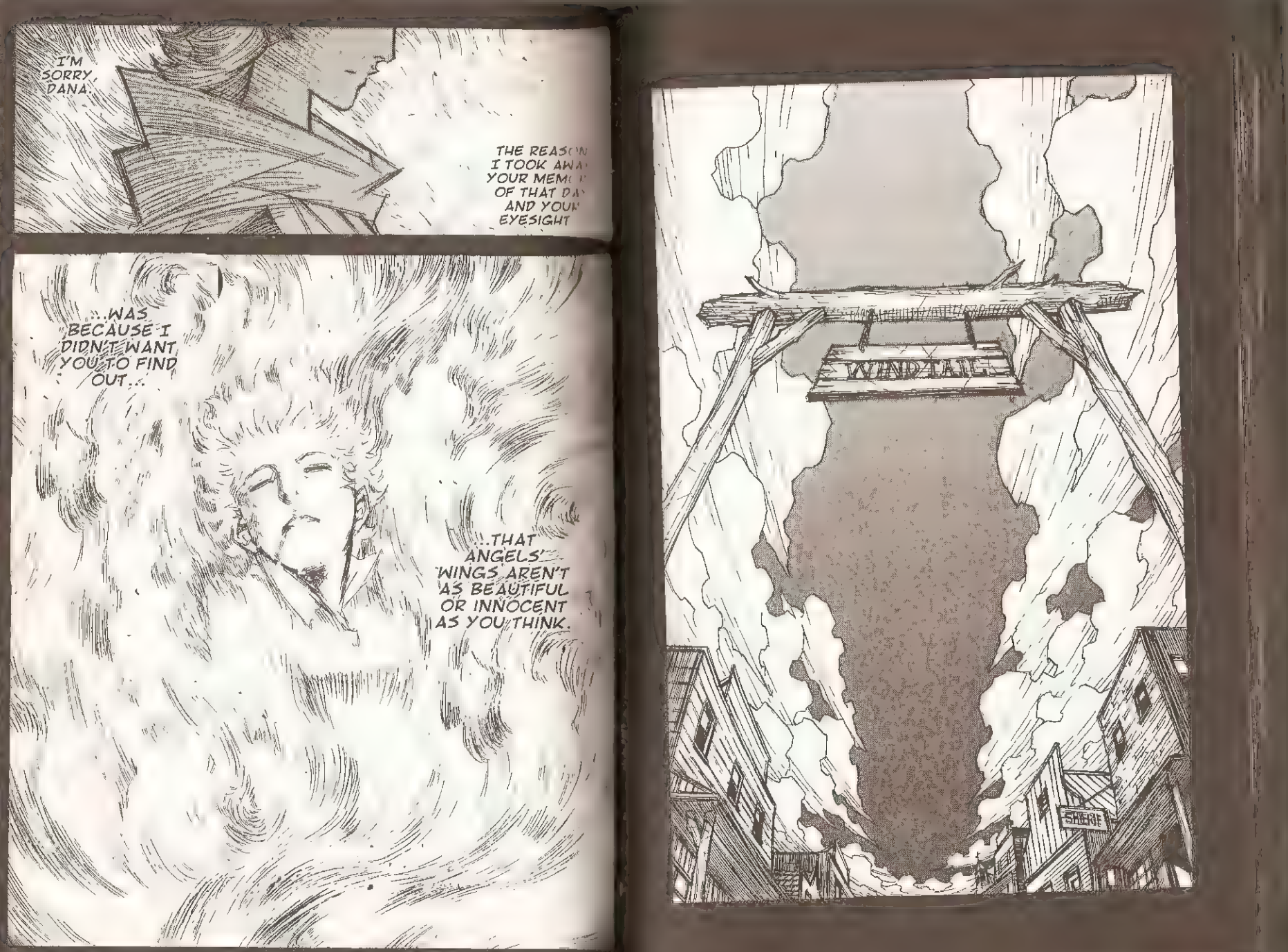

SO
YOU WOULD
PROVE YOUR
INNOCENCE
AMIDST THE
HUMANS?
GO, MY
NEPHILIM!
LEARN THE TRUE
NATURE OF THOSE
WHOM YOU PITY.
HOW CLOSELY
THEY TAKE AFTER
THEIR GOD--SO
CONCEITED. SO
MERCILESS.


I REALLY CAN SEE THE WINGS OF ANGELS?
NERA... IT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?

I AM SO SORRY, DANA...
...THAT YOU DIED SO YOUNG BECAUSE OF OUR JEALOUSY.
...AS YOU LAY THERE CRYING AT THE ENCROACHING DARKNESS...
NO SOONER HAD HE DELIVERED YOUR SOUL INTO THIS WORLD...
...THAN WE WHO DEFIED HIM DECIDED TO PLAYED A CRUEL TRICK ON YOUR FATE BEHIND HIS BACK.
...I DID NOT REGRET BRINGING SUCH SUFFERING UPON YOU.

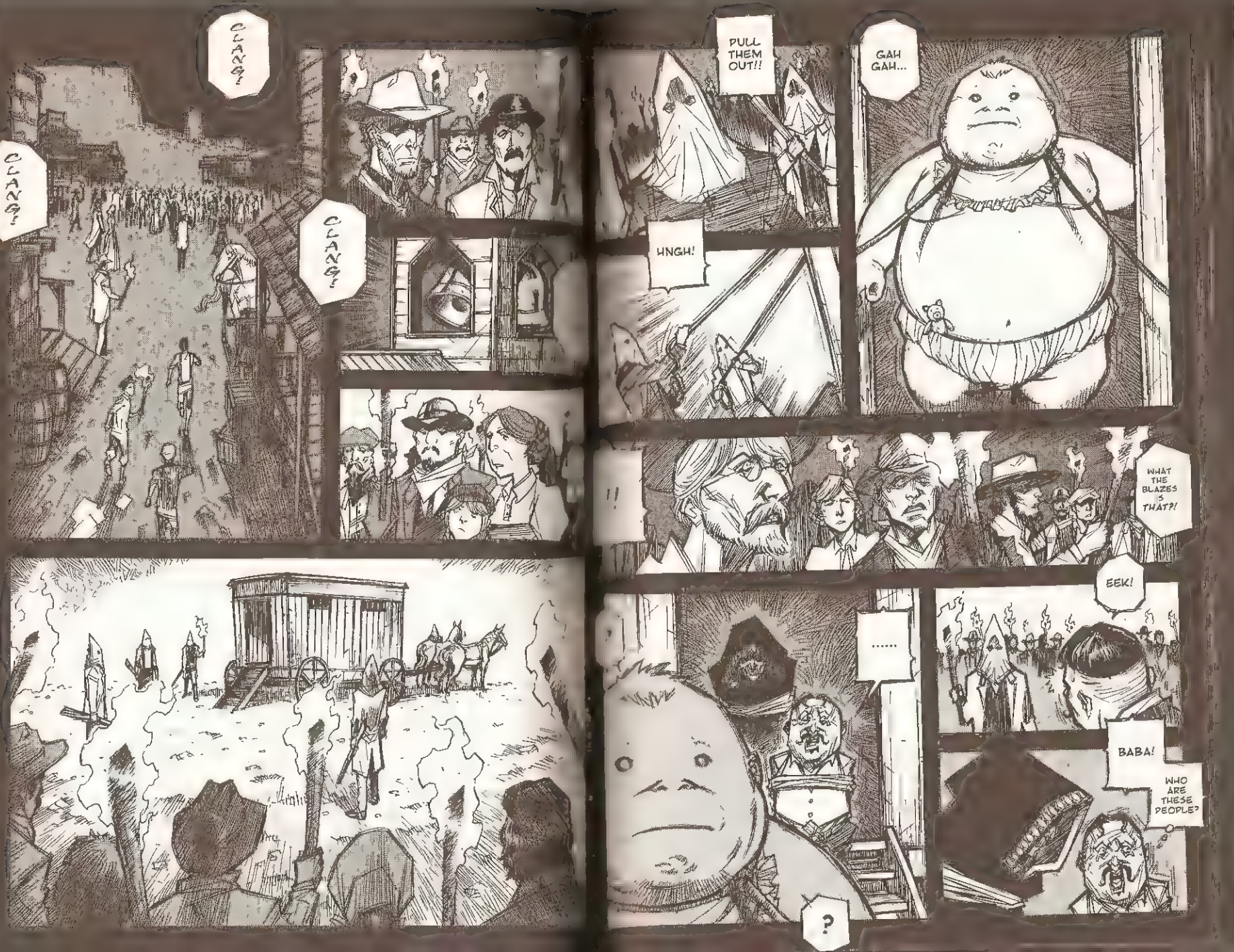


BUT THE DAY YOU TOOK YOUR FIRST STEP...
...AS I SAW HOW DELIGHTED YOU WERE WHEN YOU GAZED UP AT MY WINGS...
...I REALIZED WHAT I HAD DONE TO YOU.


I'M SORRY, DANA.
THE REASON I TOOK AWAY YOUR MEMORY OF THAT DAY AND YOUR EYESIGHT
...WAS BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO FIND OUT...
...THAT ANGELS' WINGS AREN'T AS BEAUTIFUL OR INNOCENT AS YOU THINK.
WINDTAIL
SHERIF

...WAITING FOR YOU TO ARRIVE.
HE DIDN'T JUST TAKE AFTER HER LOOKS.
MR. DUDLEY? SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOU, SIR...
HE TOOK AFTER HER HEART, AS WELL
HE'D ALWAYS FIGHT WITH ME..
...DIDN'T SIT WELL WITH HIM, EITHER.
...BY REMINDIN' ME THAT "MOTHER WOULDN'T DO THAT."
THE POOR FOOL...

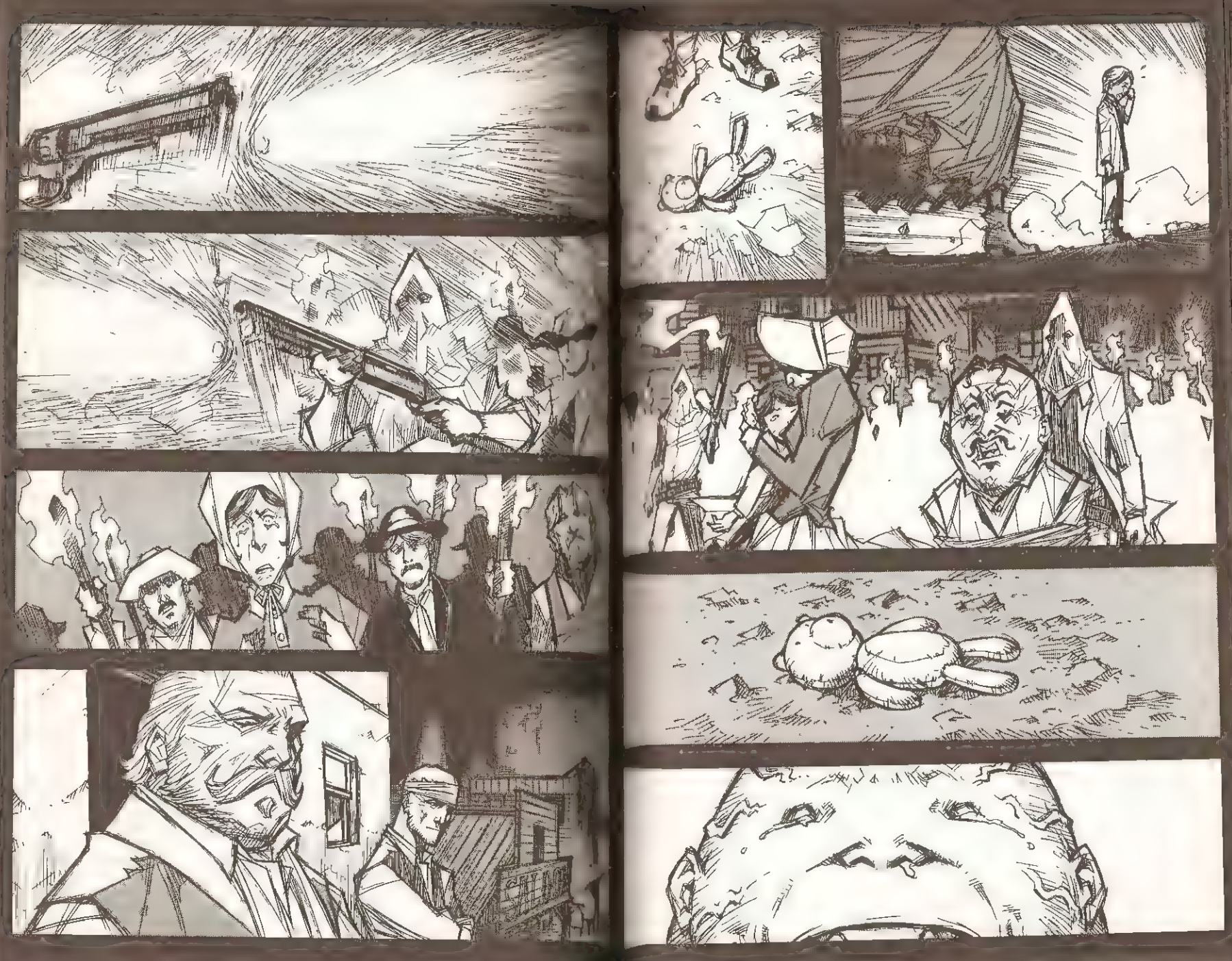
HE REALLY... WAS A FOOL...
TAK
JUST LIKE YOUR MOTHER...
...YOU TRIED TO RUN AWAY FROM ME WITHOUT GIVING ME A SECOND CHANCE.
IF ONLY I'D GOTTEN THERE A LITTLE SOONER, YOUR SON...
HAD I KNOWN THOSE SCOUNDRELS WERE USING YOUR SON TO STEAL FROM THE MILL...
...THINGS WOULDN'T HAVE GONE THIS FAR.
NEIL!
YES, MR. DUDLEY?
WHO PUT A BULLET THROUGH MY SON'S HEART!
JUST BRING THE BITCH HERE.
IF I HEAR ANOTHER FUCKING ATTEMPT AT CONDOLENCES FROM YOU, I'LL SEE YOU DANGLING ALONGSIDE HER
SHUT YOUR FUCKING TRAP, O'NEIL!

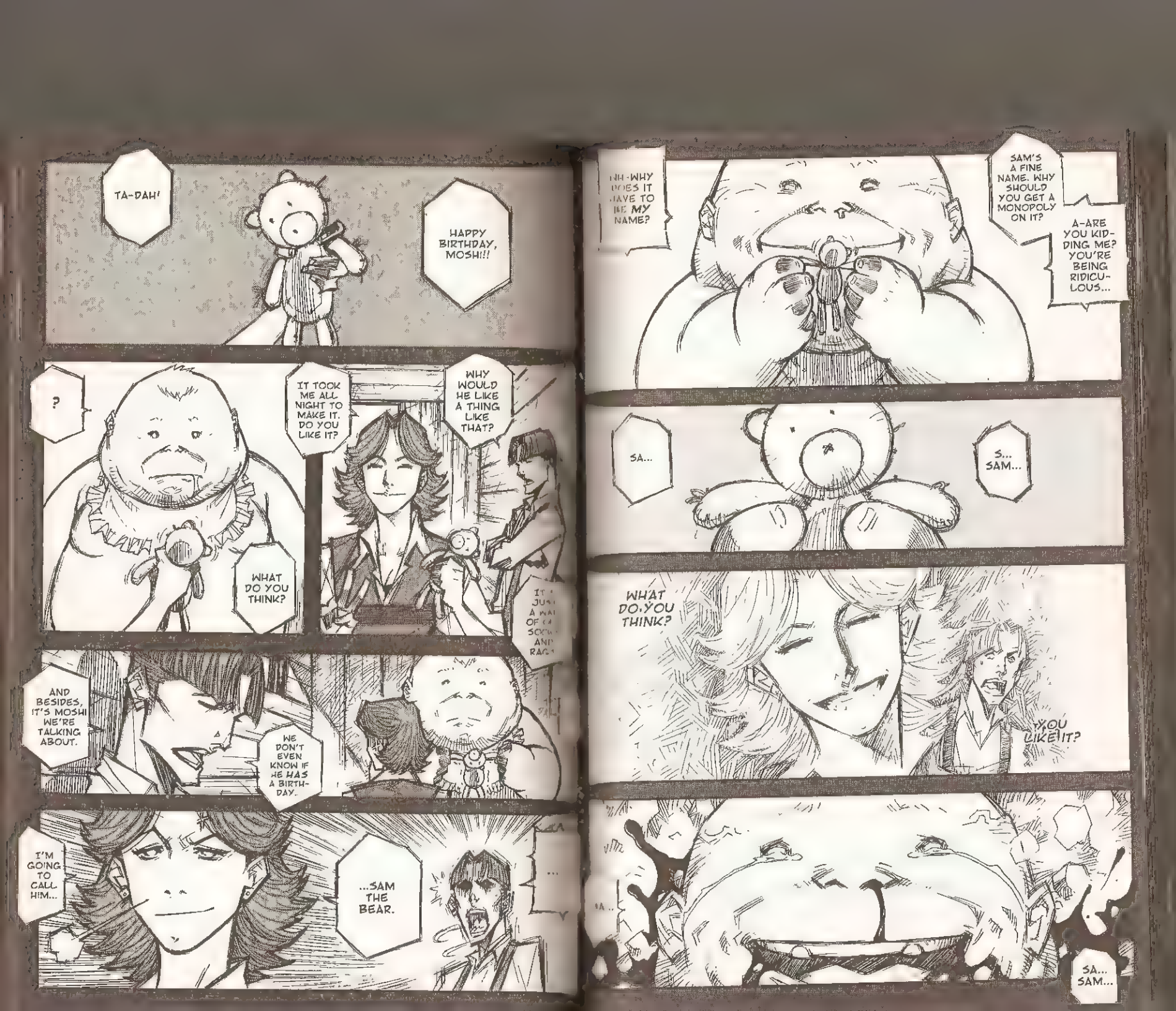

CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
PULL THEM OUT!!
HNGH!
GAH GAH...
!!
WHAT THE BLAZES IS THAT?!
EEK!
.....
BABA!
WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?
?

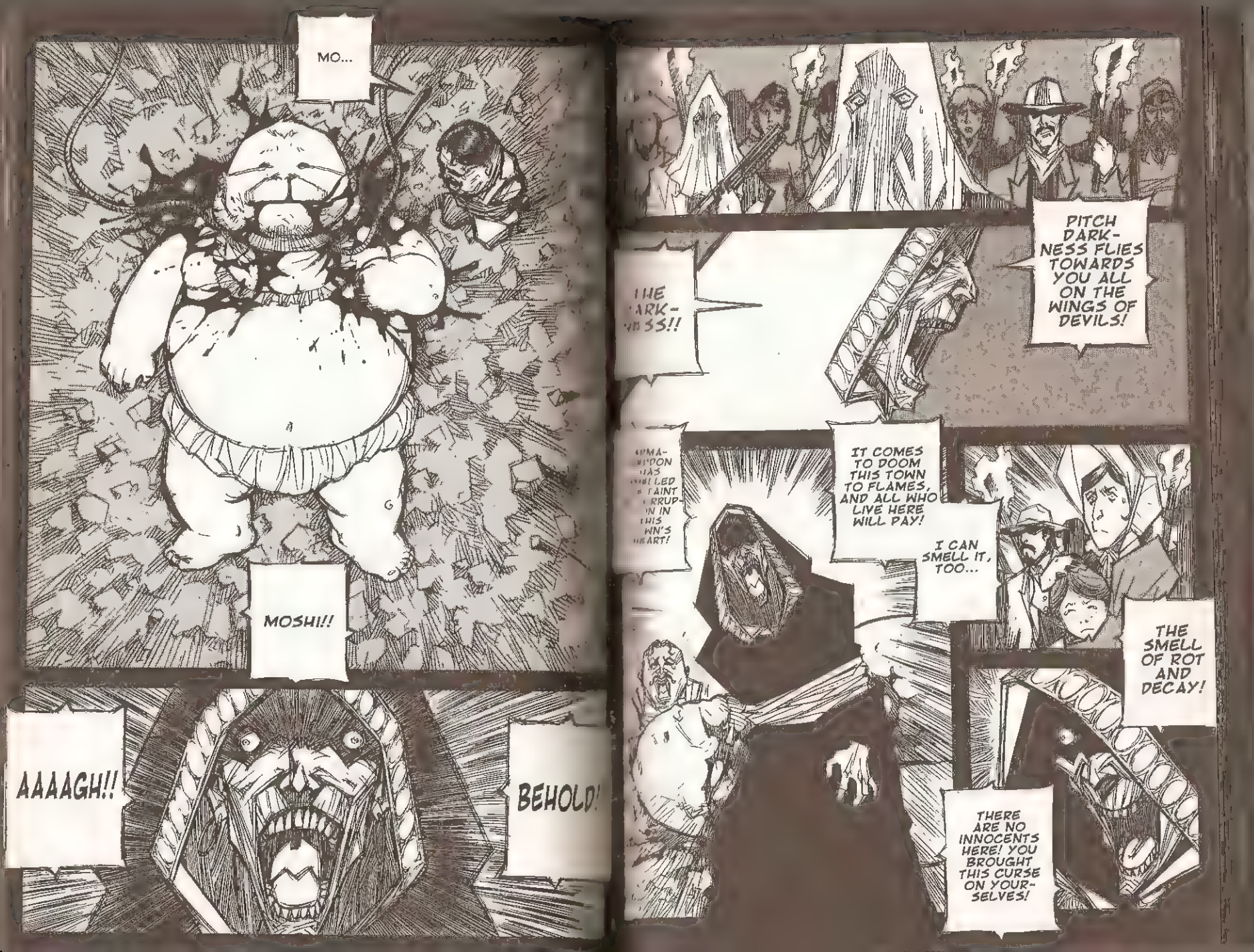
.....
WHERE IS EVERY-ONE?
NERA, DO YOU STILL NOT UNDERSTAND...?
THAT THE THING YOU ARE TRYING TO DEFEND HAS ALREADY DISAPPEARED FROM EARTH!
OR MAYBE IT NEVER EXISTED TO BEGIN WITH.
BEHOLD...
...THE TWISTED FACES OF COLD-BLOODED KILLERS!
JUST AS I'VE ALWAYS SAID...
...OUTSIDERS LIKE THEM CAN BRING NOTHING BUT TROUBLE TO WINDTALE!
OUT-SIDERS TOOK MY WIFE ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...
...AND NOW THEY HAVE TAKEN MY SON!!
THEY USED THEIR WRETCHED DEFORMITIES TO PREY ON MY POOR BOY'S PITY..
?
.. AND THEN THEY PUT A BULLET THROUGH HIS GEN-EROUS HEART.
MY SON, WHO SHOWED THEM NOTHING BUT KIND-NESS.
...
IF WE LET THESE CRIMINALS GO, WE MIGHT AS WELL BURN DOWN THE TOWN NOW...
...THOSE ABOMI-NATIONS TOOK MY SON'S LIFE!
...AS THAT'S WHAT THEIR LOT REALLY WANT!

I DEMAND JUSTICE!!
WILL YOU GIVE IT TO ME, CITIZENS OF WINDTALE?!
IF YOU CARE ABOUT THE COMMUN TY WE'VE BUILT...
...SHOW THESE OUTSIDERS WHAT WE THINK OF THEM!
GOO...
TWACK!!
OWit
.....
MUR-DERERS!!
DIS-GUSTING FREAKS!!
THEY KILLED ASHLEY!!
THEY'LL CURSE OUR VILLAGE!
DAMN THEM TO HELL! HANG THEM RIGHT NOW!!
HANG 'EM HIGH!!
PLOP
.....
NO, NOT MY FACE!
!

♫
!
NOOO!!
HANS!!
GWOO...
H-HANS! GET OUT OF THERE, NOW!!
M-
M-MOMMY...
HOLD HIM DOWN!!
WHOA THERE!
HE'S TOO STRONG
MO--
MOSHI! DO NOT DO IT!
...
WAAHH!!
GET AWAY FROM THE BOY, YOU ABOMI-NATION!!
PLEASE SAVE MY CHILD!!



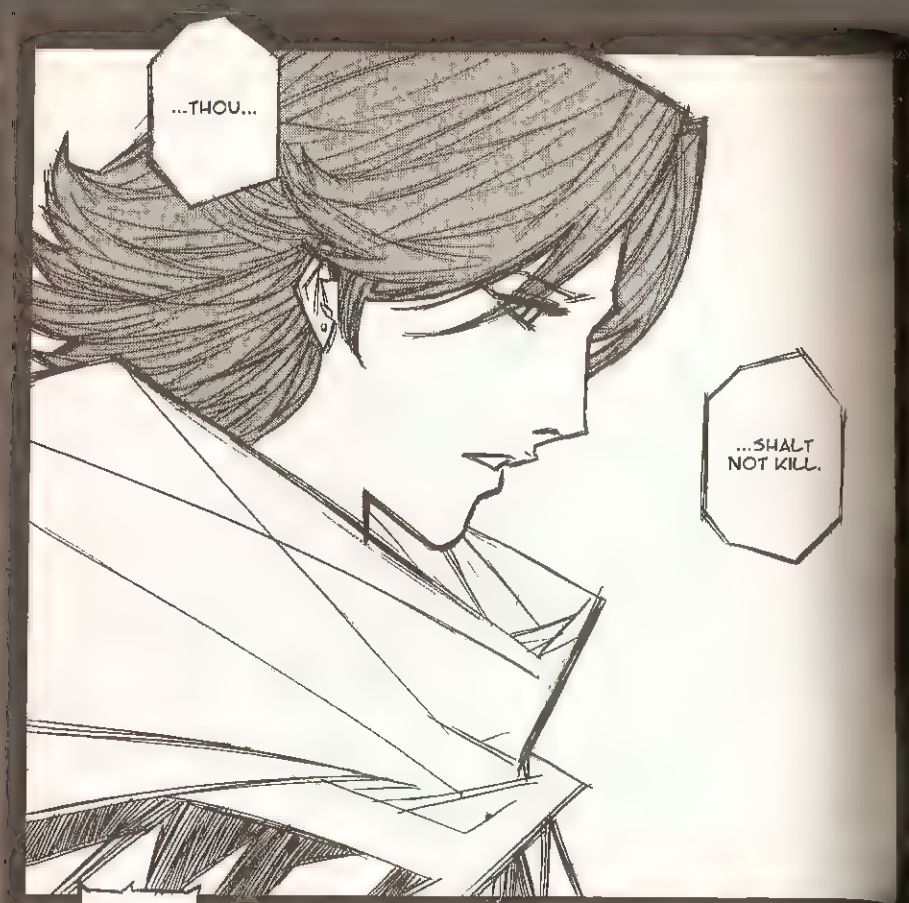

TA-DAH!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOSH!!
?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
IT TOOK ME ALL NIGHT TO MAKE IT. DO YOU LIKE IT?
WHY WOULD HE LIKE A THING LIKE THAT?
AND BESIDES, IT'S MOSH! WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE HAS A BIRTH-DAY.
I'M GOING TO CALL HIM...
...SAM THE BEAR.
...
NH-WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE MY NAME?
SAM'S A FINE NAME. WHY SHOULD YOU GET A MONOPOLY ON IT?
A-ARE YOU KID-DING ME? YOU'RE BEING RIDICU-LOUS...
SA...
S... SAM...
WHAT DO.YOU THINK?
Y.OU LIKE IT?
SA... SAM...

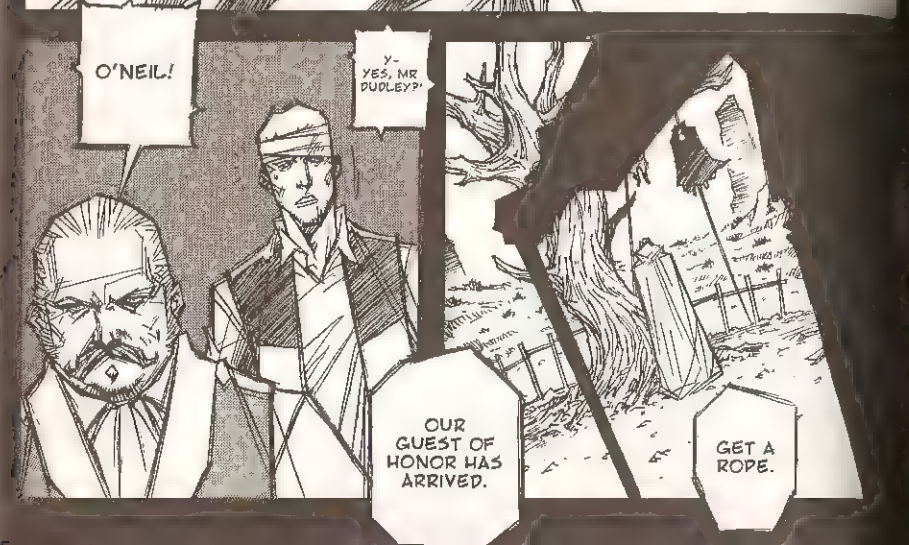

MO...
MOSHI!!
AAAAGH!!
BEHOLD!
PITCH DARK-NESS FLIES TOWARDS YOU ALL ON THE WINGS OF DEVILS!
IT COMES TO DOOM THIS TOWN TO FLAMES, AND ALL WHO LIVE HERE WILL PAY!
I CAN SMELL IT, TOO...
THE SMELL OF ROT AND DECAY!
THERE ARE NO INNOCENTS HERE! YOU BROUGHT THIS CURSE ON YOUR-SELVES!

THE HALF-SOUL DEVIL HAS COME TO COLLECT YOUR SOULS!
YOU ALL SHALL BURN! THE FLAMES OF HELL SHALL CONSUME THIS TOWN!
WHAM!
NO NEED FOR A TRIAL.
HANG THE SONS OF BITCHES RIGHT NOW!

YAAWN...
HM?
MR. DUDLEY WAS RIGHT!
...
MR. DUDLEY!
I THINK YOU WANT TO COME AND SEE THIS!
TMP!

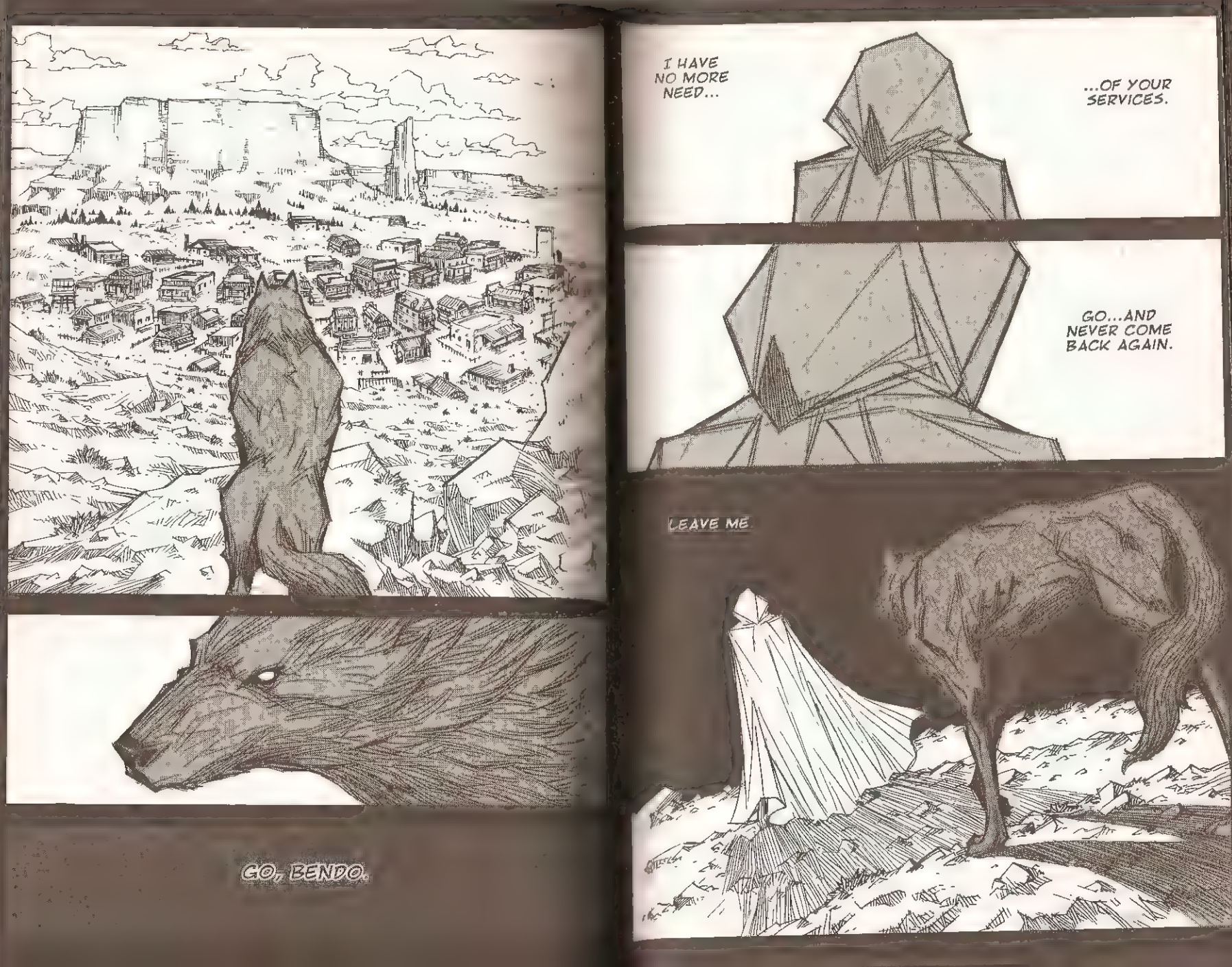
CREEK
CREEK
CREEK
CREEK
THIS TREE WAS USED FOR THE VERY FIRST HANGING HERE IN WINDTALE.
BUT I SAID NO.
NO MATTER HOW CIVILIZED YOUR TOWN BE-COMES...
...THERE'LL ALWAYS BE PEOPLE WHO DESERVE TO BE HANGED.
THE BIGGEST IRONY IN THE RULES THAT GOD PLACED ON BOTH MEN AND MY KIND WAS IN THE WORDS.
IT'S TRUE.

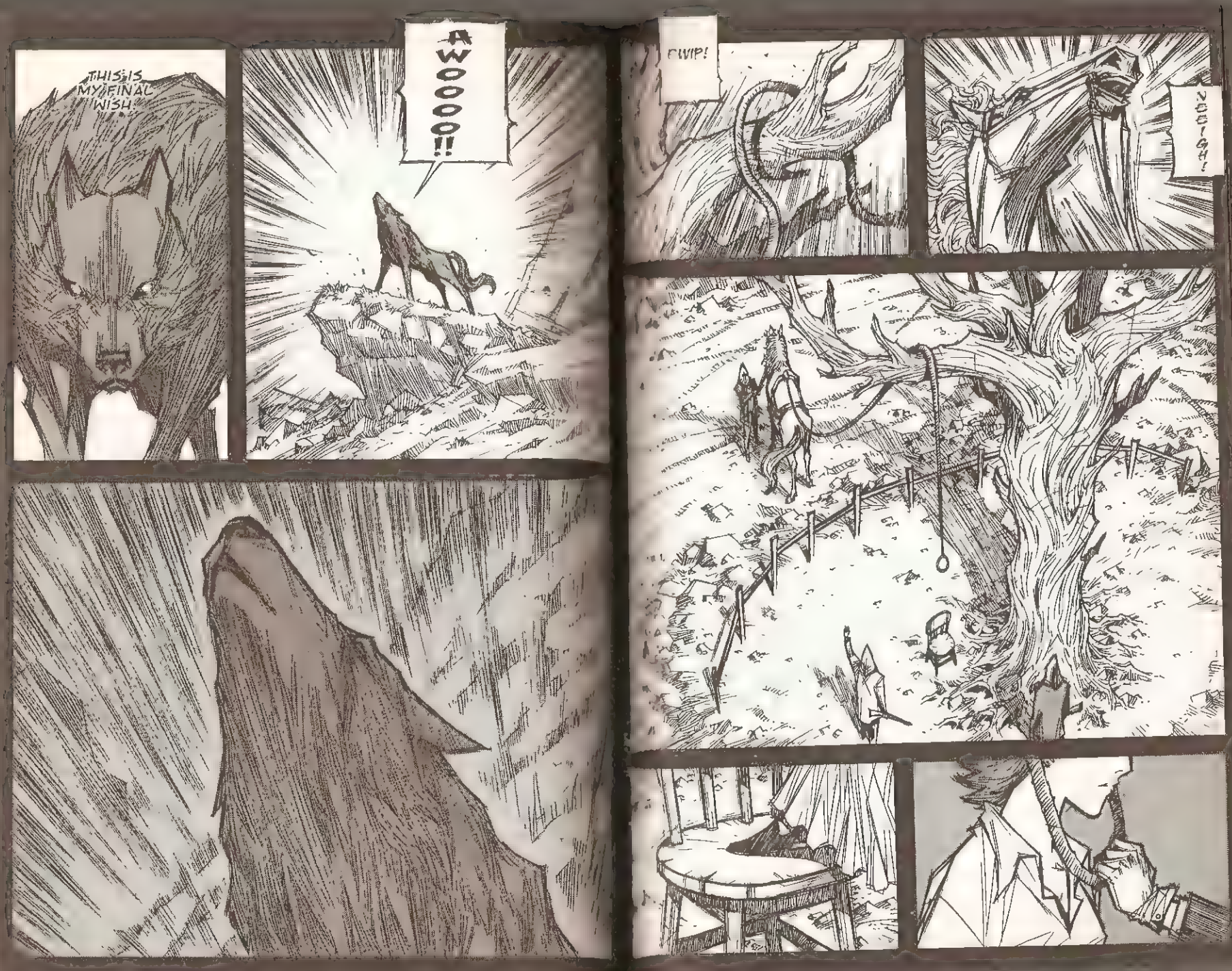

...THOU...
...SHALT NOT KILL.


O'NEIL!
Y-YES, MR DUDLEY?
OUR GUEST OF HONOR HAS ARRIVED.
GET A ROPE.

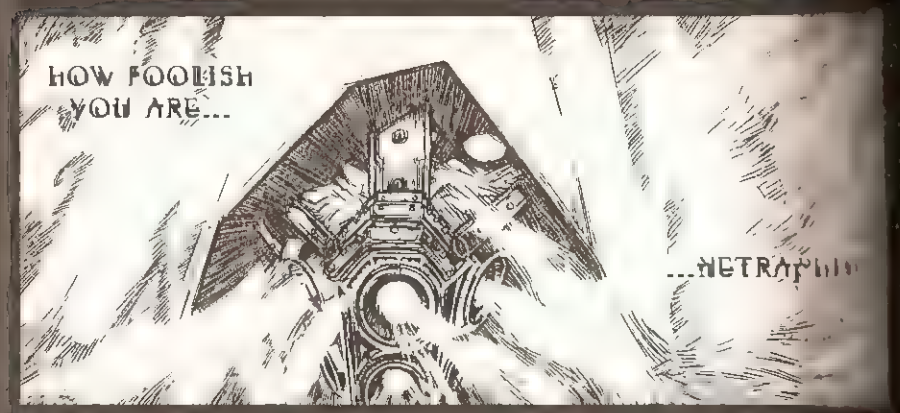
JANGO! GO RING THE BELL!
ALERT THE TOWNS-FOLK!
FORGET ABOUT THE BELL!
THERE'S BEEN ENOUGH EXCITE-MENT FOR ONE NIGHT
SEEING HER DANGLING CORPSE...
...WILL BE A PLEASANT SURPRISE WHEN THEY WAKE UP IN THE MORNING.

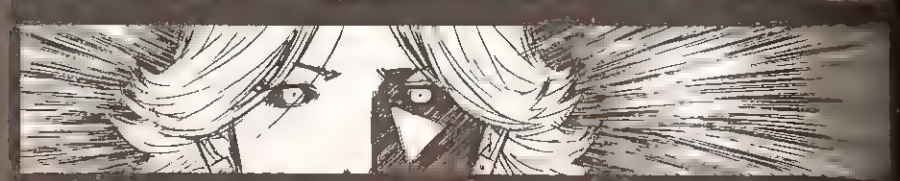
BUT MOST OF ALL, WATCHING IN PRIVACY AS HER LAST BREATH IS CHOKED OUT OF HER...
...IS MY RIGHT AS A FATHER!!

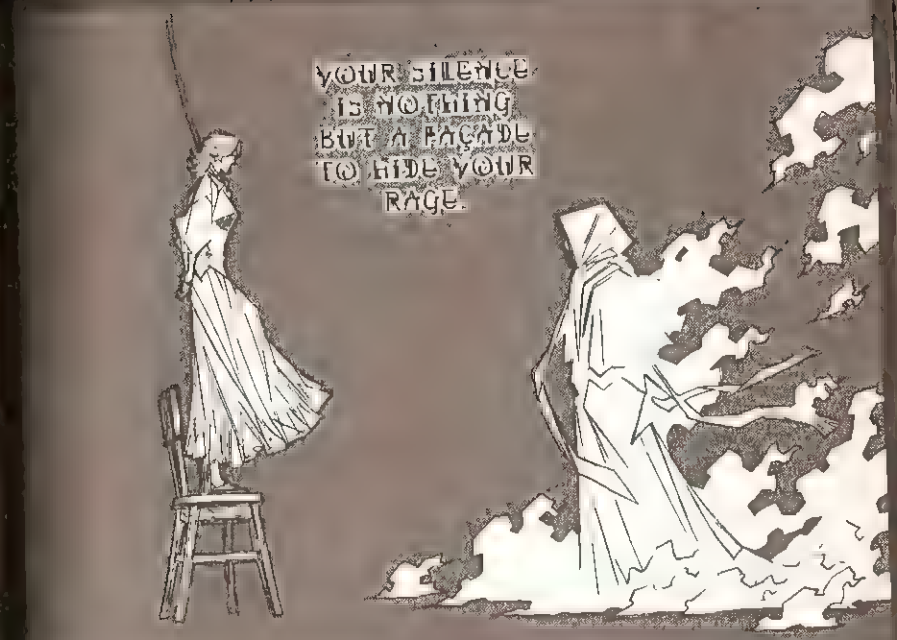

I HAVE NO MORE NEED...
...OF YOUR SERVICES.
GO...AND NEVER COME BACK AGAIN.
LEAVE ME
GO, BENDO.

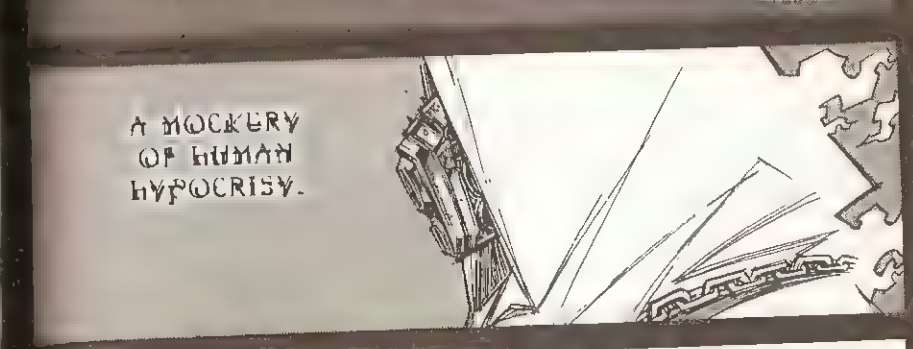

THIS IS MY FINAL WISH.
AWOOOO!!
CLIP!
NEIGH!

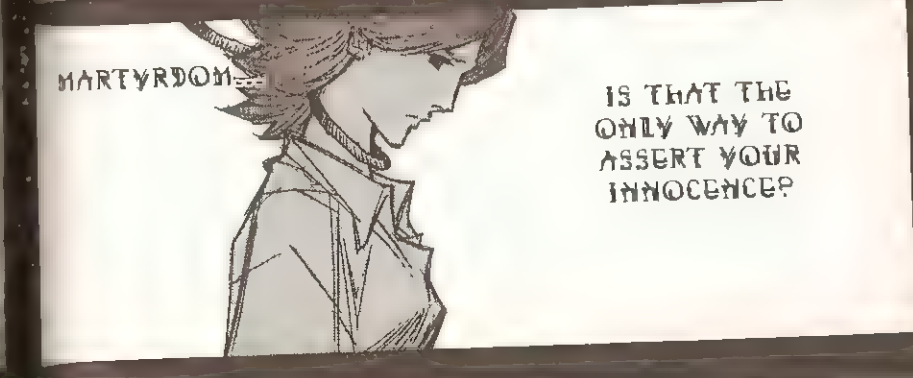
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE BEGGING ...
.. FOR YOUR LIFE...
YOU THINK YOU CAN DIE A MARTYR?
NOT AFTER THE SINS YOU'VE COMMITTED.
YOU DISGUST ME.


HOW FOOLISH
YOU ARE...
...METAPHOR



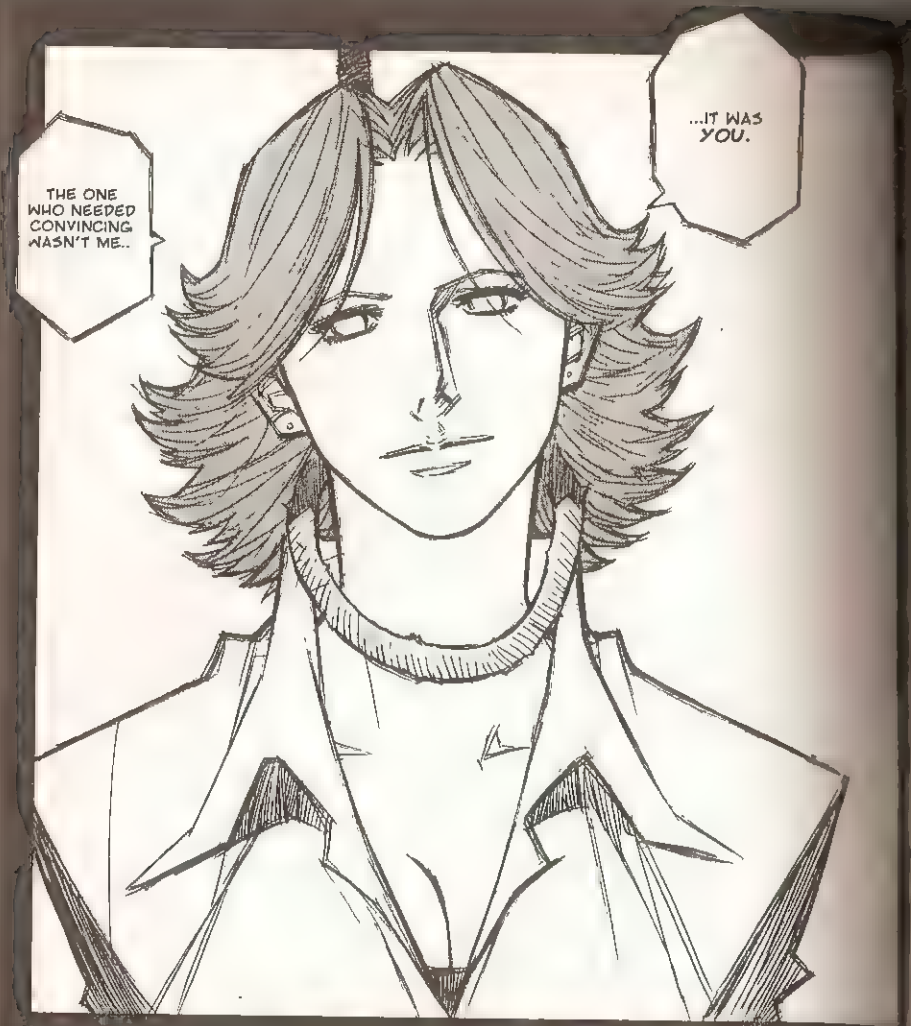

YOUR SILENCE
IS NOTHING
BUT A FAÇADE
TO HIDE YOUR
RAGE.

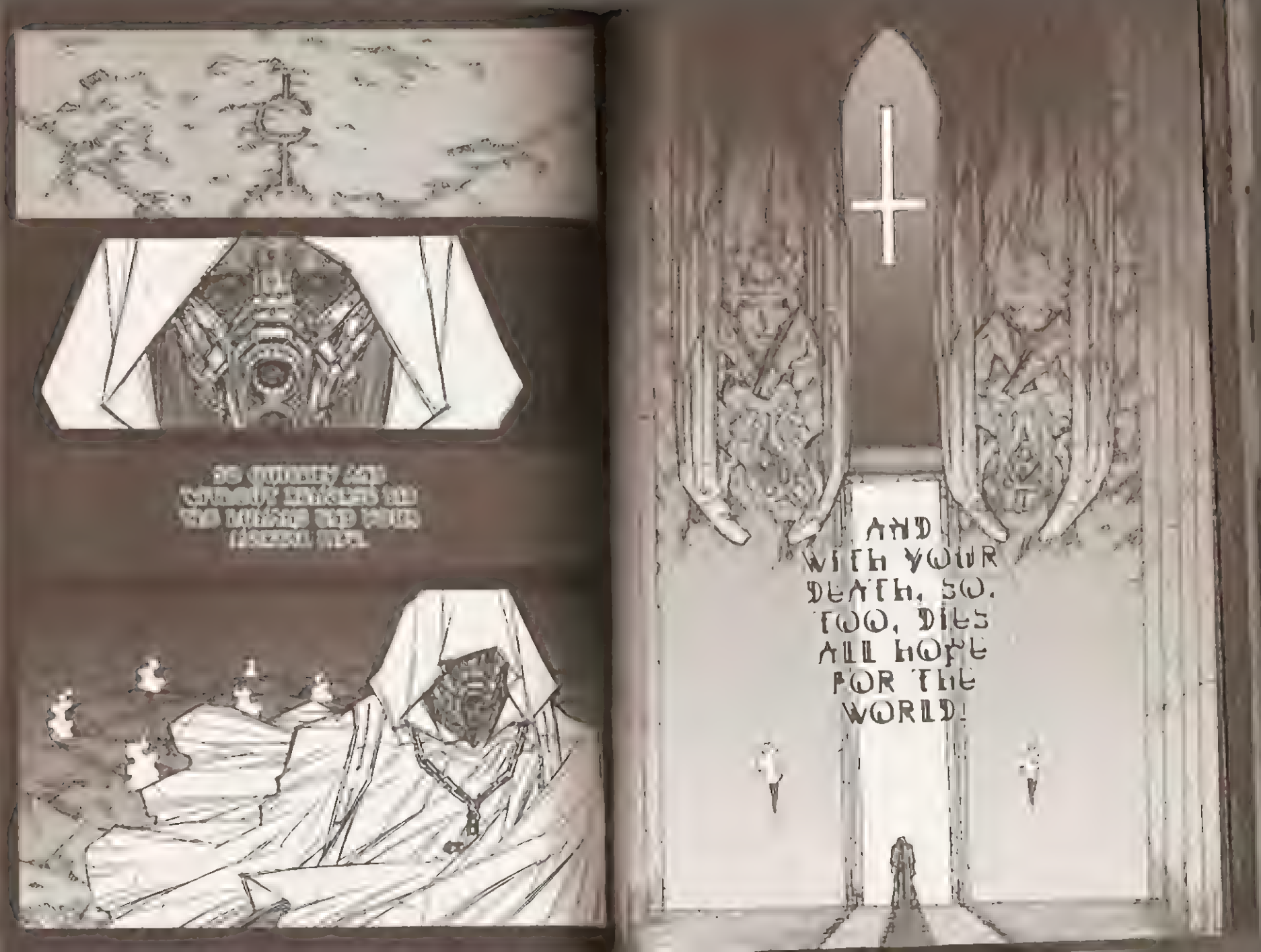

A MOCKERY
OF HUMAN
HYPOCRISY.


MARTYRDOM...
IS THAT THE
ONLY WAY TO
ASSERT YOUR
INNOCENCE?

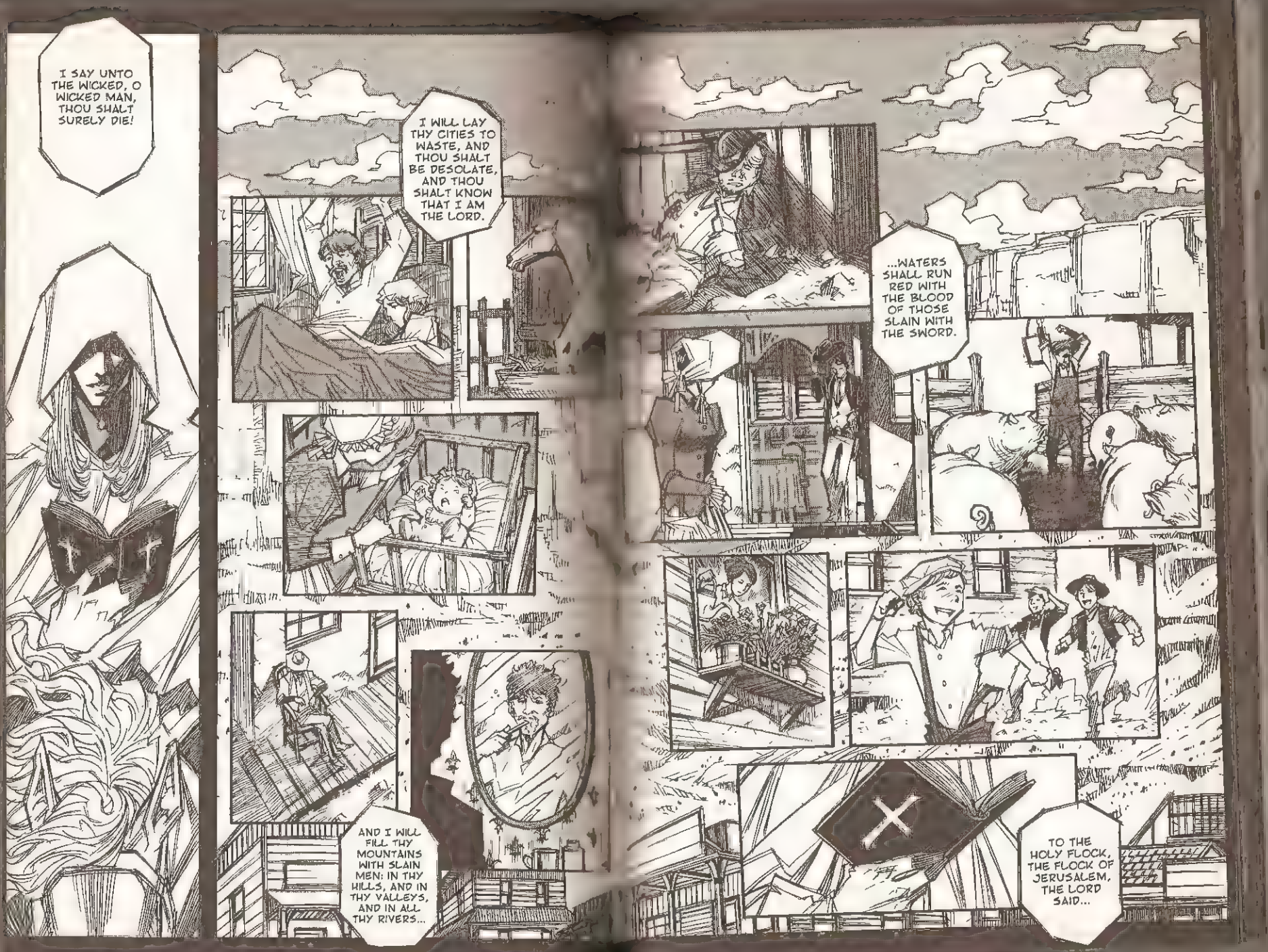
YOUR SACRIFICE WILL DO NOTHING TO END YOUR GUILT...
...NOR WILL IT STOP THIS PLACE FROM BECOMING A SITE OF HOLY BLOODSHED!
METRAPHIM
THE GAME IS OVER. YOU HAVE MADE YOUR POINT.
NOW, WON'T YOU COME BACK TO ME AND STAND BY MY SIDE...
...AS MY LOYAL WARRIOR... AND AS MY LOVER?!
YOUR SALVATION IS SO SIMPLE...
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SAY THE WORDS!

"I CURSE MY FATE...
...AND I CURSE THE GOD WHO DAMNED ME!"
MAYBE...
I...
...WAS... WRONG.


...IT WAS YOU.
THE ONE WHO NEEDED CONVINCING WASN'T ME..


AND
WITH YOUR
DEATH, SO,
TOO, DIES
ALL HOPE
FOR THE
WORLD!

THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME UNTO ME, SAYING, WHEN I BRING THE SWORD UPON A LAND...
BUT HE THAT TAKETH WARNING, I SHALL DELIVER HIS SOUL.


I SAY UNTO THE WICKED, O WICKED MAN, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE!
I WILL LAY THY CITIES TO WASTE, AND THOU SHALT BE DESOLATE, AND THOU SHALT KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD.
AND I WILL FILL THY MOUNTAINS WITH SLAIN MEN: IN THY HILLS, AND IN THY VALLEYS, AND IN ALL THY RIVERS...
...WATERS SHALL RUN RED WITH THE BLOOD OF THOSE SLAIN WITH THE SWORD.
TO THE HOLY FLOCK, THE FLOCK OF JERUSALEM, THE LORD SAID...

...I WILL TAKE YOU FROM AMONG THE HEATHEN, AND WILL BRING YOU INTO YOUR OWN LAND.

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER...
...AND OF THE SON...
...AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT...
AMEN!

CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
CLANG!
WA GA..
CLANG!
CLANG!
SON OF A...
DIDN'T YOU HEAR MR. DUDLEY SAY NOT TO--?
I DIDN'T SEND ANY-ONE.
CLANG!
SANTIAGO! IS THAT YOU?
BANG!
!!
OPEN UP, THIS INSTANT!

CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
...
I MUST HAVE SEEN THIS SCENE AT LEAST A DOZEN TIMES SINCE BECOMING A MARSHAL...
...BUT I STILL CAN'T GET USED TO IT.
YOU BUILD A FENCE AROUND YOUR TOWN AND THINK YOU CAN KEEP OUT ALL THE EVIL OUTSIDERS
BUT THE TRUTH IS, THE MOST EVIL MEN YOU'LL FIND ARE THE ONES WHO LIVE INSIDE THE WALLS.
...AND IT SURE AS HELL WON'T BE THE LAST.
BUT THAT DON'T CHANGE THE FACT...
...THAT IGNORANT FUCKS LIKE YOU MAKE ME WANT TO PUKE.
COBURN... THIS IS A LOCAL MATTER. FEDERAL MARSHALS HAVE NO JURIS-DICTION
CLOP
CLOP

MR. DUDLEY!
I HAVE NO TIME TO EXPLAIN!!
YOU AGAIN? I THOUGHT YOU'D GIVEN UP...
...ON YOUR WILD STORIES?
THERE'S NO TIME TO ARGUE!
YOU HAVE TO WARN THE CITIZENS BEFORE--
!!
MR. DUDLEY...
H-HOW... COULD YOU...?
NOW, NOW THAT'S NO WAY FOR A MAN OF THE CLOTH TO SPEAK.
WE'RE ONLY TRYING TO PROTECT WHAT WE HAVE BUILT...
...FATHER.
...!!
YOU POOR FOOL...
!
!!
WELL... I DON'T REALLY CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO THIS DAMN PLACE.
CO...
CO-BURN!!
FATHER.
HAVEN'T I TOLD YOU ALREADY?

TO BE CONTINUED IN PRIEST 16!

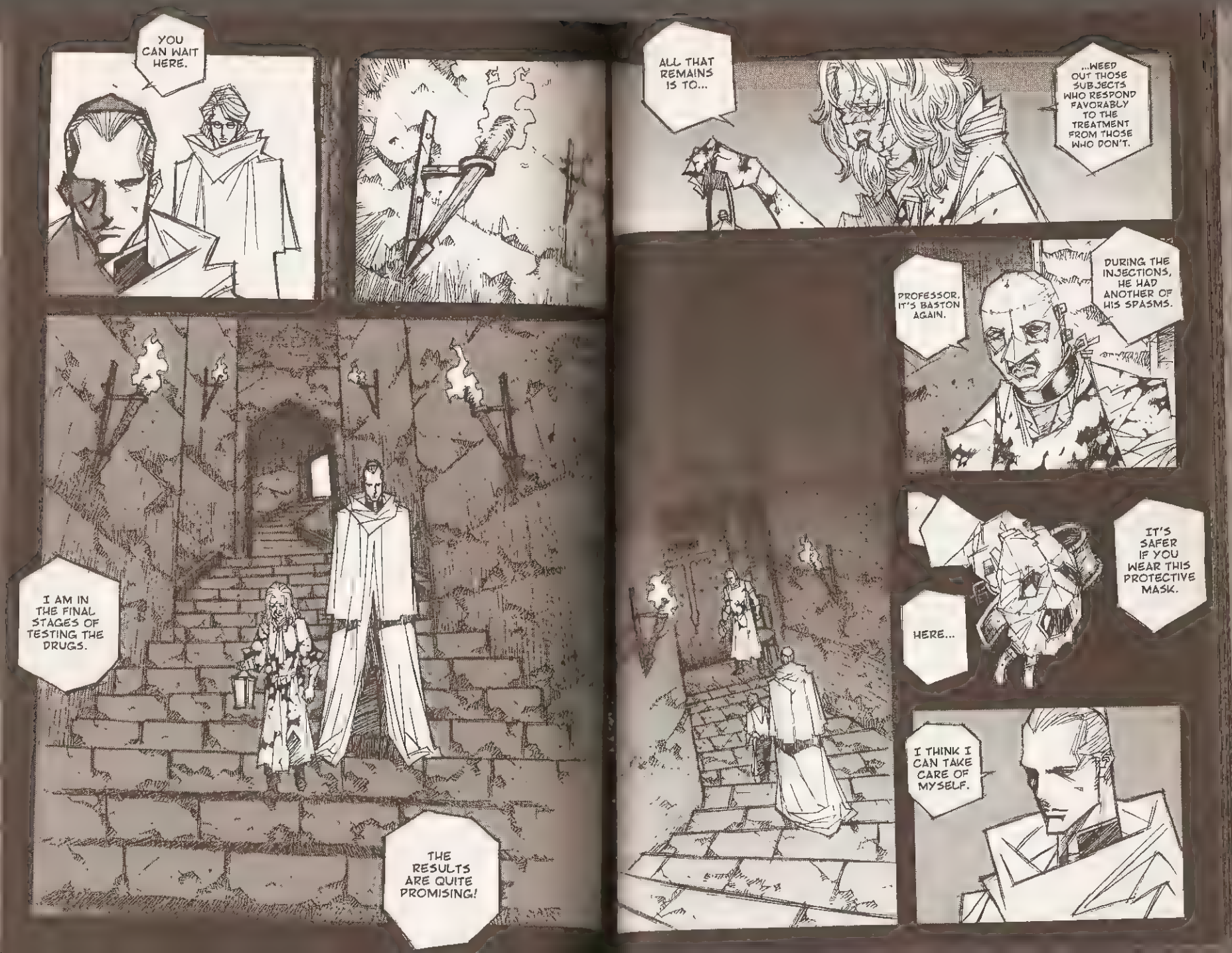
SIDE STORY

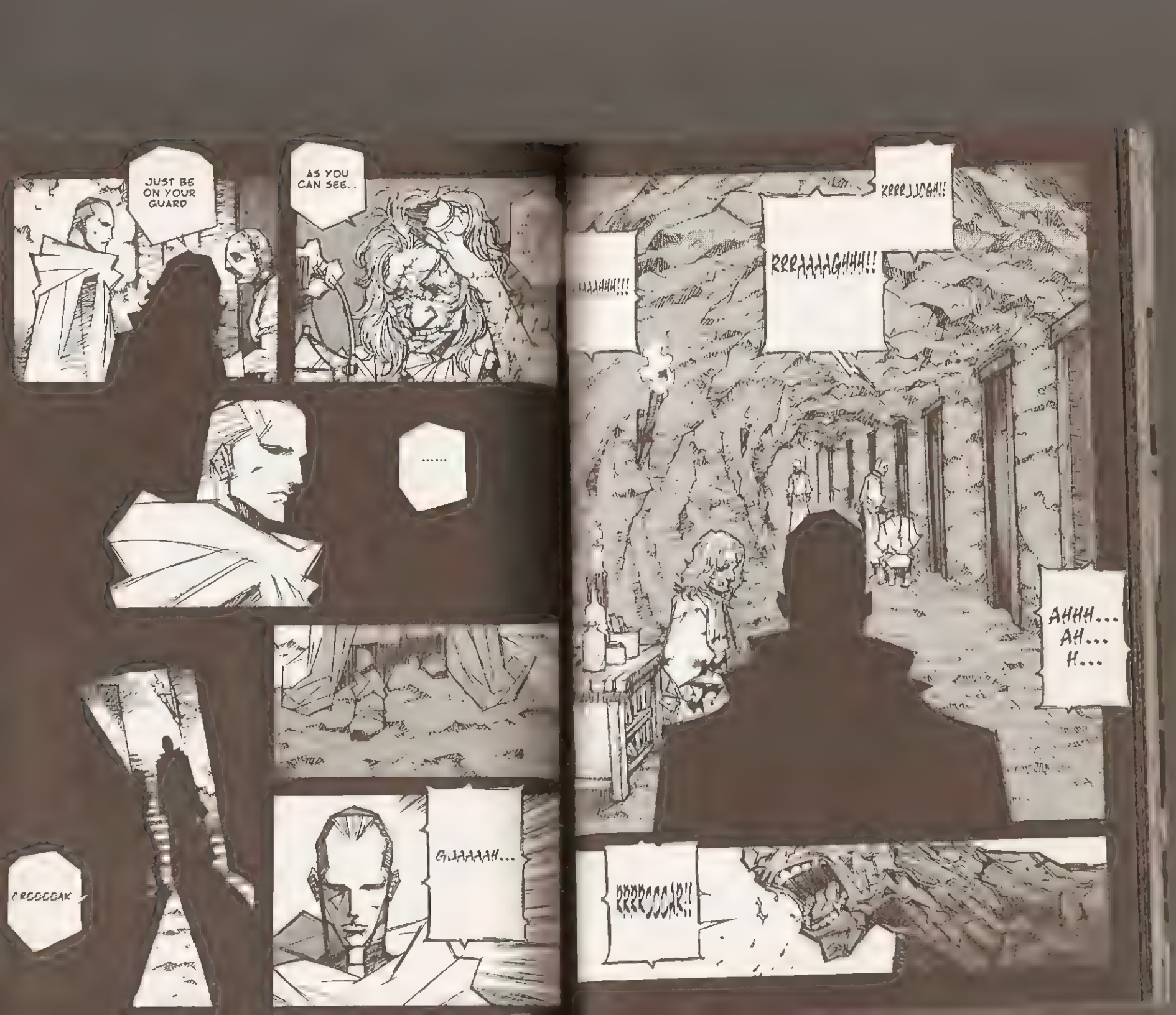
CRAZY MESSAGE

MANY YEARS AGO...

WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
UNNGH..
CLUNK!
CLUNK!
CLUNK!
OH...
YOU CAME!
I HAD HEARD YOU WOULD BE COMING, BUT ..

...I DIDN'T EXPECT IT TO BE SO SOON...
...BISHOP RAUL!
PRO-FESSOR GERARD!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO MENTION HIS EMINENCE'S NAME!
ENOUGH.
PROFESSOR GERARD, UPON RECEIVING YOUR MESSAGE FROM THE VATICAN..
...I CAME HERE AS QUICKLY AS I COULD TO SHOW HIM YOUR FIND-INGS AT ONCE.
YOUR RESEARCH WILL NOT ONLY ASSIST THE ORDER OF ST. VERTINEZ IN COMPLETING ITS CURRENT MISSION...
...BUT IT WILL LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL OUR FUTURE ENDEAVORS.
CREEEAK

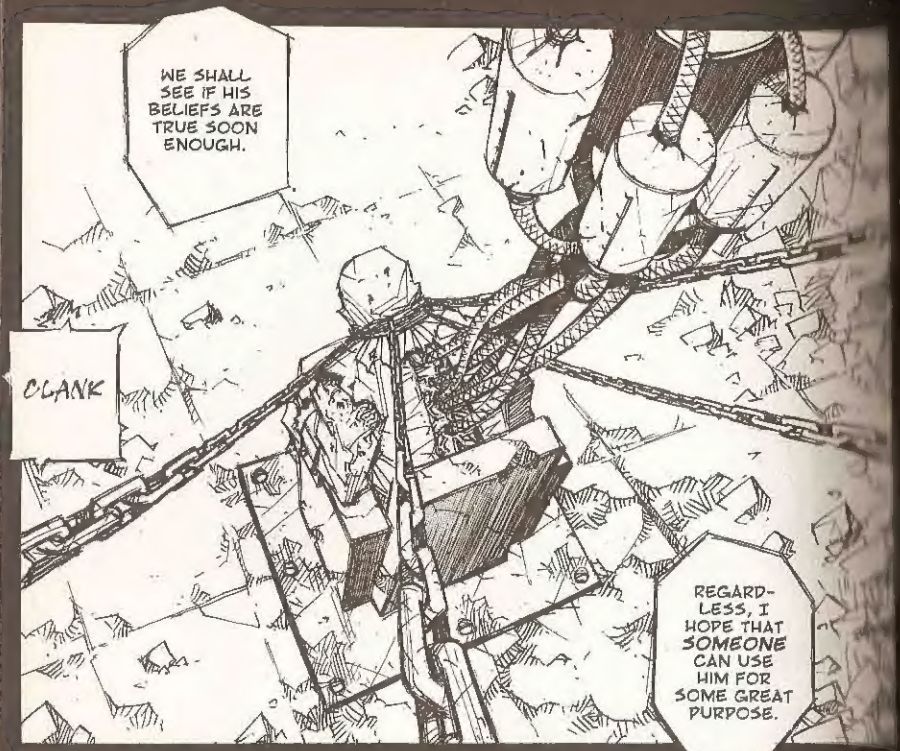

YOU CAN WAIT HERE.
I AM IN THE FINAL STAGES OF TESTING THE DRUGS.
THE RESULTS ARE QUITE PROMISING!
ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO...
...WEED OUT THOSE SUBJECTS WHO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO THE TREATMENT FROM THOSE WHO DON'T.
PROFESSOR, IT'S BASTON AGAIN.
DURING THE INJECTIONS, HE HAD ANOTHER OF HIS SPASMS.
HERE...
IT'S SAFER IF YOU WEAR THIS PROTECTIVE MASK.
I THINK I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.


JUST BE ON YOUR GUARD
AS YOU CAN SEE..
.....
CREEEEAK
GUAAAAH...
KRRRJJOGH!!
RRRAAAAGHHH!!
...AAAHHH!!!
AHHH... AH... H...
RRRRCCCHR!!

UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THE PRIESTS WHO VOLUNTEERED...
...DID NOT SURVIVE PAST THE INITIAL TREATMENTS.
TINK
...I'M AFRAID.
EVEN MORE COULD NOT SURVIVE THE TENTH ROUND.
STILL, IT GIVES US HOPE THAT...
THREE SUBJECTS ARE STILL GOING STRONG.
IT SEEMS THAT GOD HAS SPECIAL PLANS FOR THESE PRIESTS... UNLIKE THE OTHERS.

FSHH
FSHH
!
KRR...
GRRRR...
KRRRRAAAGHH!!
REGENERATIVE ABILITIES HAVE ALREADY FAR SURPASSED NORMAL HUMAN CAPACITY.

GLUB
GLUB
GLUB
GLUB
NNGGH!!
ALLOW ME TO
RODUCE
ASTON.
AMONG THE SURVIVING PATIENTS, HE HAS WITHSTOOD THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF TREATMENTS AND THE HIGHEST DOSES.
DESPITE THE EXTREME PRESSURE ON HIS BODY...
...HE HAS SURPASSED ALL OF OUR TESTS
LIKE
IE SAID
HEN HE
IRST...
...VOLUN-
TEERED
FOR OUR
EXPER MENT,
GOD MUST
HAVE GIVEN
HIM AN EXTRA-
ORDINARY
BODY ..
...FOR
AN EXTRA-
ORDINARY
PURPOSE.
AT LEAST,
THAT'S WHAT
HE SEEMS TO
BELIEVE.

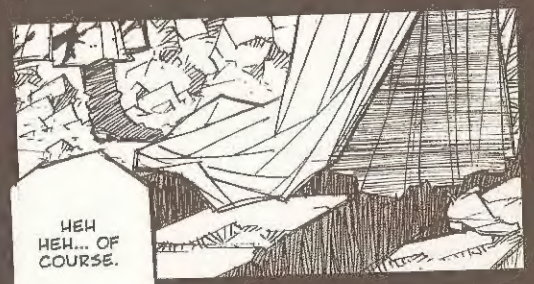

WE SHALL SEE IF HIS BELIEFS ARE TRUE SOON ENOUGH.
CLANK
REGARDLESS, I HOPE THAT SOMEONE CAN USE HIM FOR SOME GREAT PURPOSE.

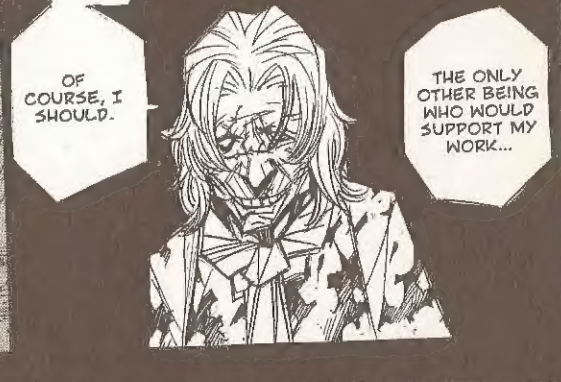
COMPENSATION FOR THE SUFFERING HE MUST ENDURE, IF YOU WILL. HEE HEE...
PROFESSOR GERARD...

THE EXPERIMENTS BEING CONDUCTED IN THIS ABBEY WOULD, BY MOST PEOPLE, BE CONSIDERED BLASPHEMOUS.
DO YOU NOT KNOW WHY OUR ORDER HAS SUPPORTED YOUR WORK AND WHY OUR PRIESTS HAVE SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES AS TEST SUBJECTS?

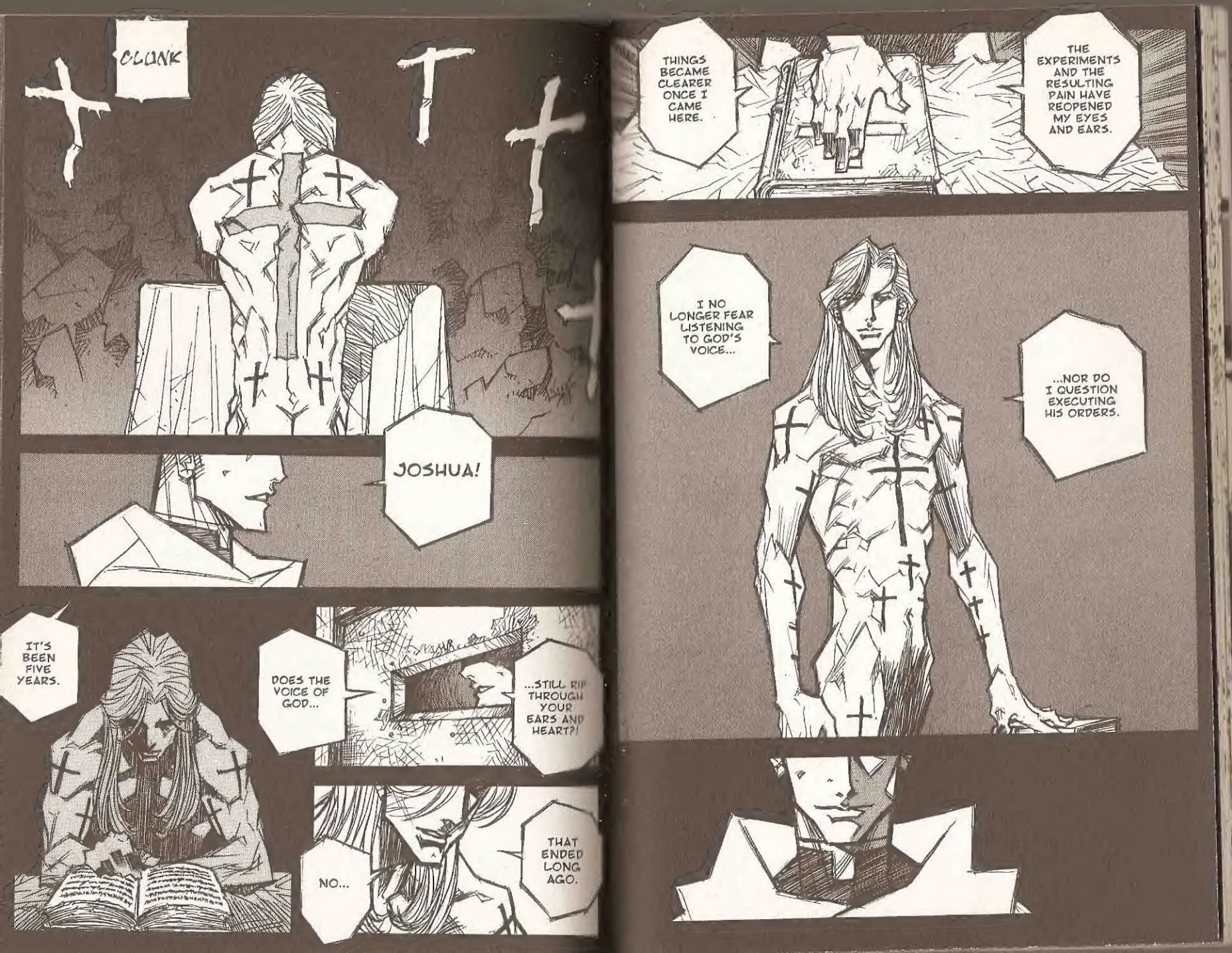
IT'S BECAUSE WE HAVE FAITH IN OUR MISSION.

I CANNOT MAKE YOU BELIEVE IN GOD...
...BUT I CAN, AT LEAST, ASK YOU TO RESPECT THEIR SACRIFICES.
ONLY THEIR BELIEF IN GOD ALLOWS THEM TO ENDURE THIS AGONY.


HEH HEH... OF COURSE.


OF COURSE, I SHOULD.
THE ONLY OTHER BEING WHO WOULD SUPPORT MY WORK...

...WOULD HAVE TO BE THE DEVIL HIMSELF!!


CLUNK
JOSHUA!
IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS.
DOES THE VOICE OF GOD...
...STILL RIP THROUGH YOUR EARS AND HEART?!
NO...
THAT ENDED LONG AGO.
THINGS BECAME CLEARER ONCE I CAME HERE.
THE EXPERIMENTS AND THE RESULTING PAIN HAVE REOPENED MY EYES AND EARS.
I NO LONGER FEAR LISTENING TO GOD'S VOICE...
...NOR DO I QUESTION EXECUTING HIS ORDERS.

END OF VOLUME 15

IVAN ISAACS WILL RETURN IN

PRIEST VOLUME 16: ZEALOTS MARCH

IN WHICH THE ORDER OF ST. VERTINEZ DESCENDS UPON WINDTALE, PAST WRONGS ARE AVENGED AND THE PLAGUE OF ZOMBIES RETURNS.